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THE GROWTH OF INTEREST IN THE EARLY ITALIAN MASTERS

FROM TISCHBEIN TO RUSKIN

Interest has lately become keen in the rise and spread of the study of "Christian art." Through the efforts of various men in all countries—among the English-speaking nations primarily through Ruskin—the world has long been made familiar with the value of the pictorial art of the early Renaissance. It is only within comparatively recent times, however, that the historian has become aware that our present attitude toward the earlier masters was a necessary corollary of the great emotional upheaval which took its inception a century and a half ago.

Several treatises—to which I shall have occasion to refer in the course of this investigation—have lately appeared, more or less directly bearing on the subject here under discussion, and it is the purpose of the present writing further to contribute to a better understanding of one of the most interesting movements in criticism, and especially to point to the importance of German influence upon it.

To appreciate the originality implied in our modern attitude toward the early painters of Italy, it will be necessary briefly to familiarize ourselves with the canons prominent in the eighteenth century. Let us remember that the age of Louis XIV, which made current the formulæ of art and of life in vogue during a large part of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was

essentially aristocratic and intellectual. It insisted on dignity, refinement, and control, and was impatient of any tendency to break through the tenets of established creed. Emotion and individuality were held in check, if not suppressed; "regularity" and clearness were insisted upon. Hence antiquity influenced that age. Not, however, in the sense in which it did the Renaissance movement in Italy—as a thing of exuberance and power, broadening the horizon and leading men back to nature. It was merely an influence in the direction of dignity, exquisiteness, and technical perfection; until refinement became weakness, dignity coldness, control stiffness.

The uncritical admiration for antiquity prevalent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries led to an infinitely narrow interpretation of the past. Our modern belief—first pronounced by Herder, and later more clearly defined by nineteenth century critics like Taine—according to which every temperament has a right to produce its own expression, was totally unknown. Whatever did not fit the established formula was rejected.

The ideal painter to those generations was Raphael. His work exhibited grace, technical skill, infinite refinement, and—his later productions at least—a knowledge of the ancients. He seemed satisfactory in every respect.

We can even today concur in this admiration, although partly for different reasons; but what seems much less intelligible to us is the fact that the Bolognese school—the Carracci, Albano, Guido Reni, Guercino, etc.—were believed to have rivaled, even distanced, the author of the "Transfiguration."

The Bolognese, such was the feeling, had freed art from mannerism, and had firmly established *le bon goût*. In the Carracci boldness and strength seemed coupled with dazzling technical ability; Guido appeared "divinely" graceful; and even Guercino, so disagreeable to us today on account of his violent contrasts of light and shade and his unnatural flesh-tints, was greatly beloved. Many writers agreed that the masters of Bologna represented the highest attainment of the human genius in the realm of pictorial art. Even Pietro da Cortona, to our

taste an empty rhetorician, was for a time regarded as a painter of the first rank.¹

Michel Angelo, on the other hand, the master-giant of the Renaissance, very characteristically for the time, seemed powerful but graceless, and hence essentially inartistic. Only after the middle of the century, after the yearning for power in literature had inspired Houdar de la Motte and Lessing with words of bitterness or ridicule for the French tragedy, Michel Angelo and Shakespeare together rose on the world. In 1772 Sir Joshua Reynolds, in a "discourse" delivered before the Royal Academy in London, declared that "the effect of the capital works of Michel Angelo perfectly corresponds to what Bourchardon said he felt from reading Homer; his whole frame appeared to himself to be enlarged, and all nature which surrounded him, diminished to atoms." The decline of Michel Angelo's reputation, he feels, was due to the decline of art.²

One might imagine that the admiration for strength which increased as the eighteenth century waned would soon have freed men from the polished Bolognese. Far from it; they exerted a sort of spell far into the nineteenth century. Then at last depth and sincerity of feeling, and naïveté, became the watch-words of art-criticism, and Guido and his associates were banished. *Sic transit gloria mundi*.³

¹ Coulanges (a cousin of Madame de Sévigné) who was in Italy in 1657 and 1658, maintains (cf. *Mémoires de M. de Coulanges*, publiés par M. de Monmerqué [Paris, 1820], p. 18): the Italians think Pietro "emporte la palme sur tous les autres," and popes, cardinals, and princes regard his paintings "avec un estime sans pareille." Lione Pascoli, in his *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti moderni* (Rome, 1730), says of Pietro (Vol. I, p. 3): "Ed in vero chi in maggior copia più di lui, e con maggior facilità, e franchezza ha dipinto cose grandi . . . Aveva il fuoco ne' colori, la veemenza nelle mani, l'impeto nel pennello." Even Cochin—of whom more later—in his *Lettres à un jeune artiste peintre*, and in other works shows a foible for him. Pietro's reputation waned, however, long before that of the Bolognese. Heinrich Meyer, in his *Entwurf einer Kunstgeschichte des 18ten Jahrhunderts* (1805), praises the latter, but attacks Pietro.

² Cf. *The Literary Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, with a Memoir by Beechy, Vol. I (London, 1899), pp. 371f. It is interesting, in this connection, to note Diderot's attitude toward Michel Angelo. In his "Pensées détachées sur la peinture, la sculpture, l'architecture et la poésie," *Œuvres complètes de Diderot*, ed. Assézat, Vol. XII (Paris, 1876), p. 118, he says: "Qui est-ce qui a vu Dieu? c'est Raphaël, c'est le Guide. Qui est-ce qui a vu Moïse? c'est Michel-Ange." And later (p. 132): "Il faut copier d'après Michel-Ange, et corriger son dessin d'après Raphaël."

³ The best representative of this hybrid attitude is Diderot. In his "Pensées détachées" (*loc. cit.*, p. 118) he says: "La colère du Saint Michel du Guide est aussi noble, aussi belle que la douleur du Laocoon." And in another place: "Il n'y a, à proprement parler, que

Throughout the eighteenth century, however, besides Raphael and the Bolognese, a few other masters of the High Renaissance throned in the realm of art. Titian and Correggio were felt to be the rivals of the greatest. Correggio charmed by his infinite grace; Titian by his marvelous coloring. Paolo Veronese, too, delighted because of the elegance of his figures, and Giulio by his ability as a technician. Lionardo, Tintoretto, Andrea del Sarto found favor, although in a lesser degree. Even Perugino and Mantegna, the former as the teacher of the "divine" Raphael, the latter as the instructor of Correggio, were deemed worthy of study. Here and there a good-natured critic or traveler has a kind word for Giorgione or for Fra Bartolomeo, or even for Bellini. Giotto is often mentioned as the founder of modern pictorial art, and occasionally someone has heard that Masaccio had something to do with the improvement of the technique of painting. But nobody is so barbarous as to waste time on Fra Angelico, Botticelli, the Lippis, Luca Signorelli, Ghirlandajo, Carpaccio—not to speak of less prominent men like Gentile da Fabriano, Cima, etc. To be sure, the names of these men occasionally occur, and the ignorant, who praise everything, praise even them. But those who know the *bon goût* are aware that almost all art which antedates Raphael is "Gothic."¹

trois grands peintres originaux, Raphaël, le Dominiquin et le Poussin. Entre les autres, qui forment pour ainsi dire leur école, il y en a qui se sont distingués par quelque qualités particulières" (*Œuvres*, Vol. X, p. 374).

¹ This word has an interesting history. In the eighteenth century it was applied to the painting, sculpture and architecture which developed in various parts of Europe after the decay of the Roman Empire and before about 1500. The Goths, meaning the barbarians who destroyed the Roman Empire, stood to the seventeenth and a large part of the eighteenth century for everything that is brutal and savage. Hence "Gothic" was tantamount to "crude, barbarous." Vasari (*Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori ed architettori*. Con nuove annotazioni e commenti di Gaetano Milanesi [Firenze, 1878-81], Vol. I, pp. 138 ff.) says: "Eccì un' altra specie di lavori che si chiamano tedeschi . . . Questa maniera fu trovata dai Goti, che . . . fecero dopo coloro che rimasero le fabbriche di questa maniera . . . e riempierono tutta Italia di questa maledizione di fabbriche." For generation after generation nobody dared to differ with the famous biographer. As late as 1778 J. G. Sulzer explains in his *Allgemeine Theorie der schönen Künste*" (2d ed. Vol. II, [Leipzig, 1792], pp. 433 ff.): "Man bedient sich dieses Beyworts [i. e., "gothisch"] in den schönen Künsten vielfältig, um dadurch einen barbarischen Geschmack anzudeuten; wiewohl der Sinn des Ausdrucks selten genau bestimmt wird. Fürnehmlich scheint er eine Unschicklichkeit, den Mangel der Schönheit und guter Verhältnisse, in sichtbaren Formen anzuzeigen, und ist daher entstanden, dass die Gothen, die sich in Italien niedergelassen, die Werke der alten Baukunst auf eine ungeschickte Art nachgeahmt haben. Dieses würde jedem noch halb barbarischen Volke begegnen, das schnell zu Macht und Reichthum gelanget, eh' es Zeit gehabt hat, an die Cultur des Geschmacks zu denken. Also ist der gothische Geschmack

Architecture was gaged by the same standard as painting. Antiquity had established the norm in this department of artistic activity, as it had in all others. Hence only those architects who were influenced by the "regular" forms were respected. The Byzantine, the Romanesque, the Gothic, the Moorish styles were all branded "Gothic." The sovereign master of the regular style was, however, Palladio, and his work was, therefore, perfect.¹

den Gothen nicht eigen, sondern allen Völkern gemein, die sich mit Werken der zeichnenden Künste abgeben, ehe der Geschmack eine hinlängliche Bildung bekommen hat Darum nennt man nicht nur die von den Gothen aufgeführten plumpen, sondern auch die abentheuerlichen und mit tausend unnützen Zierrathen überladenen Gebäude, wozu vermuthlich die in Europa sich niedergelassenen Saracenen die ersten Muster gegeben haben, gothisch. Man findet auch Gebäude, wo diese beyde Arten des schlechten Geschmacks vereinigt sind. In der Mahlerey nennt man die Art zu zeichnen gothisch, die in Figuren herrschte, ehe die Kunst durch das Studium der Natur und des Antiken am Ende des XV. Jahrhunderts wieder hergestellt worden Es scheint also überhaupt, dass der gothische Geschmack aus Mangel des Nachdenkens über das, was man zu machen hat, entstehe." For details on the history of the word, cf. G. Lüdtke: "Gothisch im 18. und 19. Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für Deutsche Wortforschung*, Vol. IV, (1904), pp. 133 ff. In addition to the passages given by Lüdtke, a few more which have come under my observation may here find a place as further illustration of the ignorance in regard to the history of art on the part of the eighteenth-century public.

The most amusing proof of confusion is perhaps the following utterance by a Swedish writer, C. A. Ehrens-vård. He says, in his *Resa til Italien, 1780, 1781, 1782*: Skrifven 1782 i Stralsund; ny upplaga (Stockholm, 1819), p. 29: "Uti arabesquerne i Pompeji och Herculanium är Gothiska architecturen målad; man ser derigenom huru litet man har fog at kalla den Göthisk." ("In the arabesques in Pompeii and Herculaneum are represented specimens of Gothic architecture; we perceive from this fact how little justification there is for calling them Gothic.") Gray, the poet, cultured man though he was, calls the Doge's palace at Venice "in the Arabesque manner," *Works*, ed. Ed. Gosse, Vol. II. (New York, 1890), p. 255, Fr. von Stolberg, as late as 1791, claims: "aus Spanien kam die gothische Architectonik über Frankreich nach Deutschland (*Gesammelte Werke der Brüder Christian und Friedrich Grafen zu Stolberg*, Vol. VII [Hamburg, 1827], p. 72). Students of Diderot remember that the most withering epithet of contempt he could hurl in his rage at his cowardly printer who had emasculated some of D.'s most seditious articles in the *Encyclopedie* was "Ostro-Goth." Ignorance concerning the nature of Gothic is further attested by Horace Mann, the correspondent of Sir Horace Walpole, who innocently believed W.'s garden at Strawberry Hill to be Gothic (cf. *Letters of Horace Walpole*, ed. Cunningham, Vol. II [London, 1891], p. 327). Here the word is used without opprobrium. Walpole himself as early as 1753 implies admiration in using the word. He writes to Bentley (*Letters*, Vol. II, p. 351) of the "charming venerable Gothic scene" presented by the buildings at Oxford during a moonlight night. A change of attitude toward the Middle Ages naturally spread the interpretation of the word as used by Walpole. By way of contrast, let us remember that Ruskin, in the *Stones of Venice* ("Torcello," §5; omitted in the Brantwood edition), uses "Gothic energy and love of life" as a term of highest approbation.

¹ Palladio's influence was particularly powerful in England. Inigo Jones (1573-1652), the creator of modern English architecture, was twice in Italy, where he enthusiastically studied the works of Palladio. He later introduced the Palladian style into England, to the almost total exclusion of national traditions. He was encouraged by the nobility, although the middle classes compelled him at times to build more nearly in the spirit of Gothic architecture. One of Jones's most remarkable classical buildings is the villa in Chiswick, Middlesex, an imitation of the Villa Rotonda by Palladio. Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723), the architect of St. Paul's, rebuilt London, after the great fire of 1666, largely in the spirit of Palladio. In the eighteenth century James Gibbs (1682-1754) and

In sculpture also antiquity was regarded as the only model. To be sure, much confusion prevailed here, as in other departments of art-criticism. Ghiberti, Donatello, even Michel Angelo, were looked upon as barbarous or semi-barbarous, while the sculptures on mediæval churches appeared merely absurd or disgusting. In the seventeenth century and during a part of the eighteenth the hollow skill of Bernini charmed, but later a new interpretation of antiquity, introduced mainly by Winckelmann, swept him aside and more firmly than ever established the Greeks.

The first important and widely known book which helped to promulgate the views of Italian art set forth above is Richardson's *An account of some of the statues, basreliefs, drawings, and pictures in Italy, &c. With remarks* (London, 1722).¹ The tone throughout is chatty and yet lifeless, and the whole treatise appears much like a catalogue. Let us take from it the pas-

Colin Campbell (died 1729) were exponents of the same taste. C. is the author of the famous *Vitruvius Britannicus* (London, 1717-25), an important source for our knowledge of the architecture of the time. The title shows how familiar the name of Palladio's teacher and model was to that generation. Campbell's Mereworth Castle in Kent (1723) and Goodwood House (1724-31) strongly bear the imprint of Palladio (cf. Gurlitt, *Geschichte des Barockstils, des Rococo und des Klassicismus*, II. Abt., I. Teil, "Belgien, Holland, Frankreich, England" [Stuttgart, 1888], pp. 313 ff.).

In 1776 appeared *Le fabbriche, ed i disegni di Andrea Palladio*, "raccolti ed illustrati da Ottavio Bertotti Scamozzi"—an enormous work in four folio volumes. A second edition appeared as late as 1843-46, showing how powerful was Palladio's name even after a movement in favor of Gothic had strongly asserted itself. The reaction against Palladio, violent in proportion to the exaggerated estimate of him, found most adequate expression in Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* (cf. especially his criticism of S. Giorgio Maggiore, in Brantwood ed., Vol. II, pp. 242 f.). His most succinct characterization of Palladio occurs, however, in *Modern Painters* (first American ed., Vol. IV [N. Y., 1857], p. 65): "The architecture of Palladio is wholly virtuous and despicable."

¹Jonathan Richardson the Elder (1665-1745) was a famous painter and art-critic, the friend of Pope, Prior, Gay, and other notables. Besides his book on art, he published verses and a work on Milton which established his reputation among men of letters. His pupil, Thomas Hudson, was the teacher of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Both Reynolds and Hogarth are said to have owed R. valuable inspiration. Examples of his work as a portrait-painter are to be seen in the National Portrait Gallery in London, and chalk-drawings by him in the print-room of the National Gallery. In 1715 he issued his *Essay on the Theory of Painting*, and in 1719 *An Essay on the whole Art of Criticism in Relation to Painting and An Argument in behalf of the Science of a Connoisseur*. The *Theory of Painting* for many years was the standard work on the subject. In 1722 appeared the *Account of some of the statues, etc.*, based on material compiled by R.'s son, but edited by the father. This work was for a long time regarded as an important authority, and is referred to by Lessing and Winckelmann. It was several times reprinted and in 1728 was translated into French. As the French edition was "revue, corrigée et considérablement augmentée . . . par les auteurs," it is more important than the original, and I shall quote from it only.

sages most important for our purposes. In Milan Richardson admires Lionardo's "Last Supper" in frosty fashion. In Bologna he gives expression to his admiration for all the Bolognese masters, including Guercino. In Florence the bronze doors by Ghiberti seem to him worthy of note, although "il y a un peu du goût gothique dans les draperies." The door by Andrea Pisano is "dans le goût gothique de son temps." In the Uffizi the works of the early masters make no impression on him. Of "L'Adoration des Mages," by Botticelli, he simply says: "Les anges, et plusieurs autres choses, en sont rehaussés d'or." Of Ghirlandajo's "La Circoncision" we read, however: "Les airs et les attitudes en sont nobles et naïves" (a strong bit of praise for a critic of that time). Yet all these pictures, for Richardson, serve only as a foil for the works of Raphael. The "Concerto," by Giorgione, Richardson describes in the following fashion: "Martin Luther (!) qui touche un clavessin, sa femme est à son côté et Bucer (*sic*) derrière lui." He tells us nothing of the Giotto's in Sta. Croce, nor does he mention Sta. Maria Novella nor S. Marco. He has much admiration, however, for Andrea del Sarto and even for Michel Angelo as a sculptor. On the description of Rome he bestows 500 pages, while 80 sufficed to exhaust a discussion of Florence. He devotes much space to a description of the remnants of antiquity in Rome, has great praise for Raphael and unbounded admiration for the Carracci frescoes in the Palazzo Farnese. The most striking artist, however, is Correggio. The paintings on the side-walls of the Sistine Chapel receive no comment from him, except that they are "fort gâtées." (All travelers of the eighteenth century, including Goethe, share this indifference toward those masterpieces.) Nor do the frescoes of the ceiling, nor the "Last Judgment," satisfy him. Michel Angelo might have been something altogether remarkable, we are told, but he was gloomy and too much like his favorite poet Dante. He was "un génie extravagant; . . . il lui manquait une solidité d'esprit, aussi-bien qu'une certaine politesse de jugement." Remarkably enough, Richardson appreciates Pinturicchio (both the frescoes in the Maria del Popolo and in Rome in the "library" of the Dome of Siena). Titian meets with his approval, as, of course, does

Giulio Romano (especially for his frescoes in the Palazzo del T in Mantua).¹

Richardson's book was eclipsed about the middle of the century by another, far more readable and brilliant, written by one of the most influential art-critics of the last two centuries, Charles Cochin. His *Voyage d'Italie* appeared in 1758, and very soon took rank among the most important works on art of the time. It was often reprinted, in 1776 was translated into German, and altogether was the most powerful barrier, in France at least, to the spread of interest in early Christian art.²

Let us select from it a few of the most significant passages.

In Ravenna the mosaics of S. Vitale appear to Cochin merely "fort mauvaises." The early Florentine school he dismisses with a few words, and the early Sienese masters escape his notice altogether. He vouchsafes no discussion of Giotto and Orcagna, and

¹ Richardson's intolerable pedantry appears best, perhaps, in the *Theory of Painting*. Here he claims (in the subdivision entitled "Of Invention") that nothing absurd, indecent, or mean; nothing contrary to religion or morality, must be put into a picture, or even hinted at. He further gives it as his opinion that, before a painter starts his picture, he should write out the story of it (!). In the *Essay on the Art of Criticism* (in the subdivision entitled "Of the Goodness of a Picture") he supplements this utterance by another of the same character; for here he assures us that, if the story of a picture fill the mind with noble and instructive ideas, he would not hesitate to pronounce it excellent, even if the drawing be as faulty as that of Correggio, Titian, or Rubens. All this from one of the leading art-critics of the time!

² Charles Nicolas Cochin, descended from a family of well-known engravers, was born in Paris in 1715 and died there in 1790. He followed his father's profession, and soon rose to great eminence. In 1749 Madame de Pompadour chose several men, among them Cochin, to go to Italy with her brother, the Marquis de Vandières, who was later made *directeur général des bâtiments*. This was the beginning of a brilliant career for Cochin. In 1751 he was made a member of the Academy, in 1752 was appointed *garde des desseins du Roi*, in 1755 *historiographe et secrétaire* of the Academy, in 1757 he was ennobled, and soon after was created *chevalier de l'Ordre de St. Michel*. It now became Cochin's ambition to make himself a power in art-criticism. For this reason he published his *Voyage d'Italie; ou, Recueil de notes sur les ouvrages de peinture et de sculpture qu'on voit dans les principales villes d'Italie* (Paris, 1758), based on notes collected during his trip in the South. The book instantly gave him much prestige. Diderot said of it soon after its appearance: "Il ne faut pas aller en Italie sans avoir mis ce voyage dans son porte-manteau". Other works of a critical character helped to strengthen his position, so that at last he became the monarch of French taste. In all his writings he pleaded for the *grand goût* as opposed to Rococo. As an etcher, however, he stands as the most adequate interpreter of all the graces and prettinesses, of the elegance and frivolity, characteristic of the court of Louis XV. From 1741 on, his plates—and their name is legion—came to be regarded as invaluable. Even Diderot granted him the very first place among French etchers. In course of time the *grand goût* which he himself had helped to establish, crowded out Rococo, and Cochin—the brilliant exponent of it with the stencil—lost his distinguished position among artists. His influence in criticism, however, was felt in France until almost the middle of the nineteenth century (cf. S. Rocheblave, *Les Cochin* [Paris, no date], and Edmond et Jules de Goncourt, *L'art du XVIII^e siècle*, deuxième série [Paris, 1882]; pp. 327 ff.).

deems it beneath his dignity to comment on Fra Angelico, the Lippis, Botticelli, Ghirlandajo, etc. The frescoes in the Campo Santo in Pisa, he tells us, are specimens of the old school, and "par conséquent mauvaises." The older Venetian masters are hardly more to his liking. Carpaccio, he thinks, has merit, but is dry. Of the Bellini in S. Zaccaria in Venice—that favorite of Ruskin—he merely says "assez beau, d'une manière très-douce et très-fondue; on y trouve beaucoup de vérités, mais froides." Even Giorgione is an object of but mediocre interest to him.

The masters of the High Renaissance appear to Cochin vastly more important. Andrea del Sarto, especially the Madonna del Sacco, greatly attracts him. Much greater than Andrea is, of course, Raphael. As the *Voyage* does not deal with Rome—on the plea that a special work would be needed to do justice to that metropolis of art—Cochin has comparatively little opportunity to discuss him. In Bologna, however, the Sta. Cecilia, and in Florence the Madonna della Sedia, delight him. More important than his utterances on Raphael are his remarks on the later Venetians, as no one had so greatly appreciated their artistic importance before. Paolo is the greatest painter for "la composition raisonnée d'un tableau (a significant phrase)." Cochin has unstinted praise for Titian, and Tintoretto fascinates him in spite of faults.¹ Of Correggio we read: "La nature seule l'a guidé, et sa belle imagination a su y découvrir ce qu'elle a de plus séducteur." Even Pietro da Cortona attracts him. His favorites, however, are the Bolognese. Through them, he claims, "la peinture est arrivée au plus haut degré de perfection." Cochin's view of architecture implies as much contempt of the Middle Ages as does his view of painting. Of the dome of Pisa he records "une grande Eglise assez belle, l'extérieur en est gothique, tout bâti de marbre, et orné, sans goût, de colonnes de toutes sortes de marbres;" while the dome of Milan is to him "le comble de la folie du travail des Architectes Gothiques."

Cochin's powerful influence was in Germany supplemented,

¹ Rocheblave has shown (op. cit., pp. 104 ff.) that throughout the pages of the *Voyage* is scattered a doctrine of art recommending the imitation of the Venetians at the expense of the "Roman school."

and soon supplanted, by that of Raphael Mengs.¹ His essays on art must be regarded, together with the works of Cochin, as the most adequate expression of the art-tenets of the eighteenth century. He voices the same principles as Cochin—with this modification, that here and there a broader attitude toward the art of the early Renaissance is faintly foreshadowed. So he says of Giotto: “Seine Umrisse sind trocken, die Falten seiner Gewänder zu abgebrochen, allein seine Farben ungemein lebhaft.” Of Masaccio he grants: “Sein Geschmack nähert sich Raphael mehr als der übrigen Maler jener Periode. Seine Draperien sind grösser und nicht so abgebrochen, wie bei Giotto.” Masaccio, furthermore, had more expression than his predecessors and contemporaries. Other early masters fare less well with Mengs. Verocchio was the teacher of Lionardo, but, Mengs adds, “malte in einem sehr trockenen Geschmack.” Lionardo had good points, but his works are sometimes “etwas platt.” “Seine Charaktere [sind] nicht immer edel und die Falten der Gewänder etwas abgebrochen.” Mengs has only partial admiration for Andrea, while he notes of Michel Angelo: “Sein Colorit ist grau, sein Helldunkel zu gleichförmig.” His men are excellent, but his women lack grace. Later artists are far greater favorites with Mengs. Correggio, in contrast with the “trockene Geschmack” of his teacher Mantegna, was conspicuous for charming, though often incorrect, drawing and for “Rundung.” In his own way, Correggio was one of the greatest painters. He carried to consummation “was Lionardo da Vinci nur andeutete.” In his oil-paintings he is to be compared only to the “göttliche Raphael.” The Venetians, however, find less absolute favor with Mengs than they did with Cochin. Giorgione “zeichnete in erhabenem Geschmack, aber nicht sehr correct,

¹Mengs was born near Dresden in 1728, spent a large part of his life in Rome, and died there in 1779. He was for many years regarded as the most distinguished painter in Europe, and was often compared with Raphael. He was a friend of Winckelmann, and together with him for a time established in Rome, and from there in all Europe, the superiority of German influence. On Mengs cf. the article in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*; O. Harnack, *Deutsches Kunstleben in Rom im Zeitalter der Klassik* (Weimar, 1896), pp. 7 ff., 21 ff., *et passim*; Otto Harnack, *Essays und Studien zur Literaturgeschichte* (Braunschweig, 1899), pp. 192 ff. His works were first edited by G. N. d'Azara (2 vols.; Parma, 1780); another edition, with additions (Bassano, 1783); a new edition by C. Fea, corrected and enlarged, appeared in Rome in 1787. The first German translation, by C. F. Prange, appeared in Halle in 1786. I used A. R. Mengs's *Sämmtliche Schriften* . . . neu übersetzt . . . und herausgegeben von Schilling, 2 vols. (Bonn, 1843-44).

beinahe in der Manier Michael Angelo's." Titian is remarkable for his boldness of stroke. In his last period, however, his manner became "grob." Yet Mengs admits "die Wirkung seiner Gemälde ist wahr." He admires the color in Titian's best works, but modifies this bit of praise by adding that the drawing is generally incorrect. Mengs finds much to admire in Paolo Veronese, but adds: "seine nackten Figuren sind sehr steif und die Gesichtszüge der Köpfe abgeschmackt." Critical as Mengs is, he finds it difficult to bestow unstinted praise even on the Bolognese, great though his admiration is for them. Of Ludovico Carracci we read: "Sein Geschmack in der Composition ist gross, schön und edel, seine Zeichnung ausserordentlich anmuthig. Er hatte den herrlichen Geschmack, welchen wir an Correggio bewundern." His color, however, is less admirable, and his draperies are a bit monotonous. Augustino Carracci "besass ein ungemeines Talent, componierte sehr, und zeichnete ausserst correct," but his color is a bit too dark. Annibale Carracci's drawing is "grossartig und ziemlich correct, nur etwas zu rund." Of Guercino he tells us: "Sein Geschmack in der Composition ist frei und gut, seine Zeichnung grossartig, allein nicht sehr correct." His color and his draperies are only partially satisfactory.

It is apparent, then, that throughout the century, in all parts of Europe, art-criticism, in spite of slight deviations in detail, agreed in regarding Raphael and the Bolognese as having reached the supreme height of artistic achievement. Other masters of the High Renaissance were ranked but little below them, while the representatives of the earlier periods were deemed unworthy of regard.

In order to understand how this fabric of art-criticism, apparently so strong and brilliant, could crumble, and in the nineteenth century be replaced by radically different views, we shall have to recall several of the great revolutionary tendencies of the eighteenth century.

The whole so-called romantic movement flows, as has often been pointed out, from a mighty reawakening of emotional life. Even in the French literature of the seventeenth century emotion here and there timidly comes to expression; as, for instance, in

the letters of Madame de Sévigné and in the choruses of *Athalie*. At the threshold of the eighteenth century we meet James Thompson, whose works, however tame to the modern reader, were the expression of a new impulse. Not long after the complete *Seasons* appeared the first three cantos of Klopstock's *Messias* (1748). Its enthusiastic reception proved to what an extent Germany craved emotional depth and seriousness. Somewhat later, emotional power—sometimes even to an extent incompatible with self-control—determines most of Diderot's views of life and art, as expressed in his *Salons* and elsewhere. Synchronous with Diderot's most revolutionary works are those of Rousseau, in which emotion ran riot, and which led to a complete subversion of the old order.

Concomitant with this upheaval in literature was the desire for a profounder and more genuine religious life than the seventeenth century had known. The disciples of Spener as early as 1689 started that great spiritual movement within the Protestant church, known as "Pietism," which gained such momentum upon the removal of A. H. Francke to Halle in 1694. Pietism was succeeded by the "Herrnhuter," who combined in 1727 for the purpose of stimulating in one another brotherly love and a purer Christian life. Some ten years later John Wesley started that powerful movement in favor of religious fervor within the English church, known as "Methodism." In 1762 Rousseau published his *Émile*, in the fourth book of which appeared the "Profession de foi du Vicaire Savoyard." Here all the pretenses of reason are rejected as hollow, and intuition is declared infallible.

As emotional life deepened, a new interpretation of the past forced itself upon the minds of men. A conviction arose that the period so long despised as "Gothic" might contain elements of deep inspiration. We need hardly concern ourselves with the early sporadic efforts of individual enthusiasts to acquaint their contemporaries with mediæval records. Suffice it to call to mind here that as early as 1734 Bodmer, the Swiss critic, published *Character Der Teutschen Gedichte*, and in 1743 *Von den vortrefflichen Umständen für die Poesie unter den Kaisern aus dem schwäbischen Hause*. A little later, between 1753 and 1759, he

put forth—in very uncritical garb, to be sure—*Der Parcival*, parts of the *Nibelungenlied*, and the *Minnesänger*. In 1755 Mallet gave to the world the first translation of the *Edda*, and another Frenchman, Sainte Palaye, issued the first volume of a large work *Mémoires sur l'ancienne chevalerie* (1759). In 1760 the appearance of *Ossian* strongly contributed to the confused but genuine love for things mediæval which was so rapidly widening European culture. Hurd's *Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, which appeared soon after (1762), mark an important advance. For the author aims to prove "the pre-eminence of the Gothic manners and fictions, as adapted to the ends of poetry, above the classic." He has the boldness to prefer the Gothic manner to the heroic as found in Homer.¹ At the same time, the first step was taken in Germany toward a critical study of the national past. Möser's *Osnabrückische Geschichte*, which appeared in 1768, may be regarded as the first faint attempt at a historical study of the Middle Ages.

In 1764 appeared the first important novel with mediæval setting, Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, the forerunner of the works of Mrs. Radcliffe and Sir Walter Scott. Simultaneously there was created in Germany a form of poetry intended to reflect the spirit of the German past. In 1766 Gerstenberg published his *Gedicht eines Skalden*, which, though intensely crude, inspired works like Klopstock's patriotic dramas, *Hermannsschlacht* (1769), later followed by *Hermann und die Fürsten* and *Hermanns Tod*. Gleim, patriot-poet, four years after the appearance of the *Hermannsschlacht* issued poems in imitation of the minnesinger, and in 1779 another volume in imitation of Walther von der Vogelweide.

At about the time when Klopstock was inflaming German patriotism, an Englishman of culture called the attention of his countrymen to older periods of English literature. Thomas Warton's *History of English Poetry from the Twelfth to the Close of the Sixteenth Century* (Vol. I in 1774) marks a significant step in the Gothic Revival.

¹ Cf. H. A. Beers, *A History of English Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1899).

Not one of these admirers of the Middle Ages, however, betrayed any true conception of the character of the time. The first to convey such insight was Herder. His *Auch eine Philosophie der Geschichte zur Bildung der Menschheit* (1774) reads like a prophecy of the views promulgated about a generation later by the German Romantic School. The Germanic individuality and the tenets of Christianity, Herder claims, together created a new epoch in the history of mankind, the Middle Ages. "Wir wollens Gothischen Geist, Nordisches Ritterthum im weitesten Verstande nennen—grosses Phänomenon so vieler Jahrhunderte, Länder und Situationen." With all their faults, those times had the advantage over us moderns in point of health and of simplicity. In conscious opposition to Voltaire's *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations*, he continues: "Wie es auch sei, gebt uns in manchem Betracht eure Andacht und Aberglauben, Finsterniss und Unwissenheit, Unordnung und Rohigkeit der Sitten, und nehmt unser Licht und Unglaube, unsere entnervte Kälte und Feinheit." Later, in his great historical work, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784 ff.)—the first attempt on a large scale at culture-history in the modern sense—Herder again does justice to the importance of the Middle Ages, though in less rhetorical a fashion, thus paving the way for a scientific appreciation of a despised period.

Nor was the Romantic School slow to take up the hints thrown off by Herder, and mediævalism became a watchword of German literature. The propaganda made by the Schlegels and Tieck for the mediæval, the historical works of Johannes Müller, and especially the sound contributions of the Grimms and their associates, ultimately led to a profound and critical understanding of mediæval culture.

The emotional element contained in the interest in the Middle Ages was mightily strengthened by the blending with it of that constantly growing religious enthusiasm which, as we saw, had modified the character of the Protestant church in the eighteenth century. When mediævalism had become almost a universal passion, it was natural that the religiously inclined should feel an

increasing reverence for the church which so admirably embodied the very essence of mediæval civilization.

Two documents best reflect this mood, Novalis' essay *Die Christenheit oder Europa* (written 1799) and Chateaubriand's *Le génie du Christianisme* (1802). Novalis' remarkable work, written by one who never joined the Church of Rome, is not a plea for Catholic dogma, but exhibits, rather, a passionate appreciation of the sensuous beauty of Catholicism, and a Rousseau-like love for simple-mindedness and faith:

Es waren schöne, glänzende Zeiten, wo Europa ein christliches Land war, wo eine Christenheit diesen menschlich gestalteten Welttheil bewohnte. . . . Mit welcher Heiterkeit verliess man die schönen Versammlungen in den geheimnissvollen Kirchen, die mit ermunternden Bildern geschmückt, mit süssen Düften erfüllt und von heiliger, erhebender Musik belebt waren Mit Recht widersetzte sich das weise Oberhaupt der Kirche frechen Ausbildungen menschlicher Anlagen auf Kosten des heiligen Sinns und unzeitigen, gefährlichen Entdeckung-en im Gebiete des Wissens.

Similar in sentiment, but more scintillating in expression, is the panegyric on Catholic Christianity by that most brilliant representative of early French Romanticism, Chateaubriand. The *Génie du Christianisme* aims to obliterate the influence of Voltaire, and to return to the interpretation of history as represented by Bossuet's *Discours sur l'histoire universelle*. The claim is here advanced that "de quelque côté qu'on envisage le culte évangélique, on voit qu'il agrandit la pensée, et qu'il est propre à l'expansion des sentiments." Side by side with this fervid Catholic fought for a time the versatile August Wilhelm Schlegel. In his *Vorlesungen über schöne Litteratur und Kunst* delivered in Berlin 1801-4, in the lecture entitled "Malerei," he arraigns the critical spirit of the Reformation and complains of the modern lack of religious feeling and the sense for mysticism. The spirit of chivalry he calls "eine mehr als glänzende, wahrhaft entzückende, und bisher in der Geschichte beyspiellose Erscheinung," and adds "nicht bloss äusserliche Ehrerbietung vor der Religion, sondern eine ungeschminkte innige Frömmigkeit, gehörte zu den Tugenden der Ritter."

It was natural that in an atmosphere charged to such an extent

with love of the picturesque, the mystic, and everything mediæval, the architectural forms of the Middle Ages, especially the Gothic, should exert a constantly growing fascination. In England the Gothic traditions had never been altogether lost. Even Sir Christopher Wren, of whom we heard above as the representative of Palladianism, crudely imitated Gothic forms in the towers of Westminster Abbey and in two churches in London, St. Mary Aldermary and St. Dunstan's-in-the-East.¹ In 1741 Batty Langley published Part I of his *Ancient Architecture, restored and improved by a great variety of Grand and Useful Designs*, the whole work being entitled *Gothic Architecture*, with a dissertation "On the Ancient Buildings in this Kingdom." Its aim was to remodel Gothic architecture by the invention of five orders for that style, suggested by the styles of classical antiquity. However absurd this attempt may appear, it was a significant step in an important direction.

Stimulated, perhaps, by this new interest on the part of a professional architect, Sir Horace Walpole, the son of Robert Walpole and the friend of the poet Gray, about 1750 began to turn his villa at Strawberry Hill on the Thames into a miniature Gothic castle. He worked at this until 1770. Dilettante as the undertaking must seem today, it added a strong impulse to the reintroduction of Gothic architecture. In the meantime another was laboring more seriously in the same field. James Essex (1722-84) is perhaps the first architect whose work shows a correct appreciation of old English styles. He was engaged on a large book on the history of ecclesiastical architecture at the time of his death. James Wyatt (1746-1813) may be considered the real author of the revival of interest in Gothic forms in England. His rebuilding of the nave of Hereford Cathedral in 1786, and the erection of Fonthill Abbey in 1795, are among his most important works. About a generation after Wyatt's death (1821), Augustus Charles Pugin (1762-1832) began to publish his *Specimens of Gothic Architecture*. In this and in other works, such as drawings made on a trip to Normandy (1825), by a careful study of Norman architecture he swept aside the dilettantism in matters of Gothic

¹ Cf. Charles Eastlake, *A History of the Gothic Revival* (London, 1872), pp. 33 ff.

introduced by Walpole and his sympathizers. His great son, Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812–52), then established the mediæval throughout England.¹

When Pugin was building his famous structures—i. e., during the first decades of the nineteenth century—Germany also was experiencing a mighty revival of the Gothic. Here the interest in mediæval architecture, though powerful at the start, was for a time modified by the influence of Winckelmann, then burst into renewed ardor, though imitation of the Greek never quite disappeared. That the temper of the rising generation of Germany at the time Essex and Wyatt were at the height of their activity in England, was largely in the spirit of the Gothic forms, is best attested by Goethe's youthful panegyric on the Strassburg cathedral, entitled *Von deutscher Baukunst* (1772):

Mit welcher unerwarteten Empfindung überraschte mich der Anblick als ich davor trat! Ein ganzer, grosser Eindruck füllte meine Seele, den, weil er aus tausend harmonirenden Einzelheiten bestand, ich wohl schmecken und geniessen, keineswegs aber erkennen und erklären konnte. Sie sagen, dass es also mit den Freuden des Himmels sei. Wie oft bin ich zurückgekehrt, diese himmlisch-irdische Freude zu geniessen, den Riesengeist unserer ältern Brüder in ihren Werken zu umfassen! Wie oft bin ich zurückgekehrt, von allen Seiten, aus allen Entfernungen, in jedem Lichte des Tags, zu schauen seine Würde und Herrlichkeit!²

The author of *Götz von Berlichingen*, then, sees in this structure a monument of the national spirit of the glorious past. The enthusiasm voiced by this essay was bound again and again to assert itself in spite of the authority of Winckelmann, so prevalent in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. At the very time of Goethe's strong reaction in favor of Greek ideals,³ Wilhelm Heinse,

¹ For further references on Langley, Wyatt, Essex, and the Pugins see the respective articles in *Dictionary of National Biography*.

² Hempel ed., Vol. XXVIII, p. 343. In 1775 he supplemented this essay by another entitled *Dritte Wallfahrt nach Erwins Grabe*, which is nothing more than a few pages of continued enthusiasm on Erwin, the builder of the Strassburg cathedral. (Hempel, *loc. cit.*, pp. 354 ff.)

Not even this early enthusiasm, however, implies on Goethe's part true understanding of the inherent nature of the Gothic. The young "Stürmer und Dränger," the author of the *Prometheus* and the *Faust*, admires the powerful personality which had conceived this mighty structure, rather than the edifice itself. At no time of his life, then, did he show an appreciation of the Gothic as a satisfactory art-form. (Cf. *Goethe's Werke*, ed. Heinemann [Leipzig and Wien, no date], Vol. XXII, Introduction by Harnack, p. 8.)

³ How far the reaction against the Gothic could go is shown by Goethe's *Bemerkungen zu Meyers Aufsatz "Ueber Lehranstalten der bildenden Künste"* (cf. Weimar ed., Vol. XLVII, p. 333): "Wer fühlte wohl je in einem barbarischen Gebäude, in den düstern Gängen einer gothischen Kirche, eines Schlosses jener Zeit, sein Gemüth zu einer freien thätigen Heiterkeit gestimmt?"

the author of the much-maligned *Ardinghello*, though himself an ardent adherent of the principles of Winckelmann, cannot suppress his genuine delight when viewing the same edifice that had inspired Goethe (1780):

Oben vor Sarburg erblickt man auf einmal noch zehn Stunden davon den Strassburger Thurm, der wie eine ungeheure Fichte, wunderbar noch von dem Riesengeschlecht der ersten Welt, in dem kleinen, neuern Wald, der davorliegt, entzückend frisch, und gesund und schlank zum Himmel emporsteigt Der Münster hat die lebendigste Form, die ich noch irgend je an einem Gebäude gesehen.¹

Nor was Heinse's admiration roused solely for the mediæval structures of his own country. Three years later, on his return from Rome, at the time when his love for antiquity had reached its zenith, he speaks with appreciation of S. Zeno in Verona, that fascinating Romanesque church which the eighteenth century (including Goethe) despised;² moreover, he calls the dome of Milan "das herrlichste Sinnbild der christlichen Religion."³

Even before Heinse, however, the painter J. H. Wilhelm Tischbein had exhibited great originality of taste in praising the dome of Milan, the building which Cochin regarded as the apex of Gothic folly:

Das ist ein heiliger Wald, von der Kunst aufgestellt, von Gottes Geiste bewohnt, Von magischer Wirkung in dieser grossen Kirche ist die Dämmerung, welche durch die hohen, gemalten Fenster auf die Bildhauereien fällt.⁴

¹On Wilhelm Heinse, whom we now regard as the most important art-critic between Diderot and Friedrich Schlegel, cf. K. D. Jessen, *Heinse's Stellung zur bildenden Kunst und ihrer Aesthetik* (Berlin, 1901); for the passage referring to the Strassburg Cathedral, Jessen, pp. 48 f. Cf. also Sulger-Gebing, *Wilhelm Heinse* (München, 1903).

²Cf. Jessen, *loc. cit.*, p. 138.

³*Ibid.*, p. 108. In the first volume of his *Ardinghello*, that panegyric on the art of the High Renaissance, he again takes occasion to speak with praise of large Gothic churches. (Cf. Jessen, *loc. cit.*, p. 108.)

⁴Cf. *Aus meinem Leben*, von J. H. Wilhelm Tischbein, hrsg. von Carl G. W. Schiller (Braunschweig, 1861), Vol. II, pp. 3 ff. The originality of Tischbein and Heinse is thrown into proper relief by Goethe's bitter onslaught on the architecture of this building. In the *Teutsche Merkur* for October, 1788, pp. 38 ff., appeared his essay entitled "Zur Theorie der bildenden Künste—Baukunst" (cf. Hempel, Vol. XXIV, pp. 515 ff.), in which he says: "Leider suchten alle nordischen Kirchenverzierer ihre Grösse nur in der multiplizirten Kleinheit. Wenige verstanden diesen kleinlichen Formen unter sich ein Verhältniss zu geben, und dadurch wurden solche Ungeheuer wie der Dom zu Mailand, wo man einen ganzen Marmorberg mit ungeheuren Kosten versetzt und in die elendesten Formen gezwungen hat, ja noch täglich die armen Steine quält, um ein Werk fortzusetzen, das nie geendigt werden kann, indem der erfindungslose Unsinn, der es eingab, auch die Gewalt hatte, einen gleichsam

Others were soon to take up this note. Georg Forster, scholar and traveler, in 1790 visited Cologne and spoke of the dome—although at that time it was in a fragmentary and unsatisfactory condition—as a glorious temple. He experiences there “die Schauer des Erhabenen.” He adds: “Die Pracht des himmeln sich wölbenden Chors hat eine majestätische Einfalt, die alle Vorstellung übertrifft.” A Greek temple is the very symbol of harmony and refinement, but in a building like the great dome “schwelgt der Sinn im Uebermuth des künstlerischen Beginns.” Gothic churches, when compared with Greek structures, seem like “Erscheinungen aus einer anderen Welt, wie Feenpaläste.” He deeply regrets the unfinished and dilapidated state of the dome: “Wenn schon der Entwurf, in Gedanken ergänzt, so mächtig erschüttern kann, wie hätte nicht die Wirklichkeit uns hingearissen!”¹

But the ones through whose works this enthusiasm was to reach its culmination were the brilliant brothers, Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel. Their essays and lectures, soon so widely disseminated throughout Germany, created a passion for the architectural masterpieces of the Middle Ages which affected high and low, and at last and forever established Romanesque and Gothic forms as equal in every respect, if indeed not superior, to the Greek. Friedrich, in his “Grundzüge der deutschen Baukunst, auf einer Reise durch die Niederlande, Rheingegenden, die Schweiz und einen Theil von Frankreich. In dem Jahre 1804 bis 1805,”² says:

Ich habe eine grosse Vorliebe für die gothische Baukunst; wo ich irgend ein Denkmahl, irgend ein Ueberbleibsel derselben fand, habe ich

unendlichen Plan zu bezeichnen.” As late as 1830, long after he had been in contact with the views of the Boisserées, he called this structure “eine Marmorhechel,” and significantly adds: “Ich lasse nichts von der Art mehr gelten als den Chor zu Köln; selbst den Münster nicht.” (Cf. G.-J., Vol. III, p. 10.) Moreover, the *Guide des étrangers dans Milan* (Milan, 1786), a book intended to glorify the beauties of the city, says of the dome: “L'Eglise Métropolitaine, quoiqu'elle ne soit certainement pas un monument du goût, ne mérite pas moins d'être observée par un voyageur curieux.” Also Valéry, in his *Voyages historiques et littéraires en Italie* (Brussels, 1835), a favorite guidebook of the time, says of the same church: “Le Dôme, avec ses cent aiguilles et les trois mille statues que l'on y voit perchées, n'est qu'un enorme coliffichet, plus hardi, plus extraordinaire que beau” (p. 35).

¹Cf. “Ansichten vom Niederrhein, von Brabant, Flandern, Holland, England und Frankreich,” *Sämmtliche Schriften* (Leipzig, 1843), Vol. III, pp. 26 ff.

²*Werke* (Wien, 1846), Vol. VI, pp. 179 ff.

es mit wiederhohlem Nachdenken betrachtet; denn es scheint mir als hätte man ihren tiefen Sinn und die eigentliche Bedeutung derselben noch gar nicht verstanden.

Greek architecture, he continues, has its advantages, but "die altdeutsche Baukunst [meaning the Gothic] verdient es wenigstens gewiss, dass man ihre noch unerforschte Tiefen zu ergründen strebe." Hence he speaks with deep veneration of Nôtre Dame, of the city hall of Louvain, and of the dome of Cologne.¹

August Wilhelm Schlegel, in his "Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Litteratur"² (delivered in 1808 at Vienna) also touches upon the subject of Gothic architecture.³ The Renaissance, he tells us, brought with it contempt for Gothic architecture. The Italians might be pardoned for such a view; "wir Nordländer aber wollen uns die mächtigen ernsten Eindrücke beim Eintritt in einen gothischen Dom nicht so leicht wegschwätzen lassen." He adds very wisely: "Das Pantheon ist nicht verschiedener von der Westminster-Abtei oder der Sct. Stephan-kirche in Wien, als der Bau einer Tragödie von Sophokles von dem eines Schauspiels von Shakspeare." Each is admirable in its way.

Stimulated by such utterances, Germany soon turned her attention to her mediæval remains as she never had done before. Sulpitz and Melchior Boisserée, partly through the encouragement of Friedrich Schlegel, devoted their energy to the interpretation of the older German art and architecture, and in 1810 even won over Goethe.⁴ As a result of Sulpitz's labors, the most majestic Gothic structure in Germany, the dome of Cologne, was completed in the spirit of its original architect.

In France, too, after gropings in the eighteenth century, love for the mediæval was ultimately established. Viollet-le-Duc (1814-79) labored for forty years with his pen and in his capacity as *inspecteur général* to save mediæval buildings from ruin

¹ In his *Geschichte der alten und neuen Litteratur* (printed in 1815) he compares the mediæval epics with the great monuments of Gothic architecture.

² First printed in 1809-11. *Werke* (Leipzig, 1846), Vol. V, pp. 11 ff.

³ As early as 1805 A. W. Schlegel wrote his sonnet "Der Dom zu Mailand," in which he expresses profound admiration for this building.

⁴ On the brothers Boisserée, see article in *A. D. B.* and *Sulpitz Boisserée* (Stuttgart, 1862), : Vols.

and neglect. At the same time, representatives of *belles-lettres*, too, were seized with love for mediæval architecture. So Prosper Mérimée wrote articles calculated to stimulate love for the antiquities of France, like his *Essai sur l'architecture religieuse du moyen âge, particulièrement en France* (1837), and his treatise entitled *L'Église de St. Savin* (1845).

It is clear that the views of Richardson, Cochin, and Mengs could not long continue to flourish at a time when all things mediæval were daily growing in intensity of fascination, and when emotional life was marvelously increasing in inwardness. While Cochin looked, in art, for technical mastery, intellectuality, and an adequate expression of refined worldliness, by the end of the eighteenth century an instinct had strongly asserted itself to turn to art for the manifestation of that mysticism, of that genuineness of feeling, of that spiritual depth, which had filled the author of *Parzival*, Dante,¹ and the builders of Nôtre Dame and the cathedral of Cologne. Hence Giotto, Fra Angelico, and even later masters like Perugino² were studied and revered as representatives of a lingering mediæval sentiment, not at all, as we should feel today, as bold and gifted innovators, as the exponents of an age constantly increasing in grasp of the phenomena of the visible world.³

The first feeble indications of such a change are found as far back as the middle of the eighteenth century. Even before Cochin and Mengs so forcibly formulated the *grand goût*, men

¹ The growth of interest in Dante, as is well known, was concomitant with the general growth of interest in mediævalism. Cf. Sulger-Gebing, "Dante in der deutschen Literatur des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Literaturgeschichte*, Vol. IX (1896), pp. 457 ff., and *ibid.*, Vol. X (1896), pp. 31 ff; also Hermann Oelsner, *Dante in Frankreich bis zum Endedes 18ten Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1898), chap. 3; also Kuhns, *Dante and the English Poets* (New York, 1904), chaps. 5-7.

² Not the attitude toward the old Italian masters merely, but that toward the old German painters as well, especially toward Dürer, was affected by the new point of view. This does not, however, concern us here. (For further information cf. Helene Stöcker, *Zur Kunstanschauung des 18ten Jahrhunderts* [Berlin, 1904], pp. 100 ff.) It may be noted here that Herder and his group were enthusiastic for Dürer, and that later F. Schlegel and the Boisserées made a profounder understanding general.

³ Because of this peculiar and characteristic view of the early Renaissance masters on the part of art-criticism of the first decades of the nineteenth century, it was necessary to sketch, cursorily at least, as was done above, the growth of mediævalism in the eighteenth century. We are still in need of a systematic and exhaustive study on that subject, undertaken from the comparative point of view.

appeared here and there in different countries who professed—or confessed, if you please—respect or even love for early Italian art. At the very time of Walpole's Gothic experiment, Gori, the great Florentine antiquarian, spoke with admiration of paintings on a background of gold, and Zanotti, the well-known Bolognese mathematician and connoisseur, condemned the mannerism of modern art and pointed to the simplicity of the older styles.¹ These feeble symptoms were soon followed by an admirable proof of true appreciation. An English artist, Thomas Patch, made careful drawings of the Masaccio frescoes in Sta. Maria del Carmine in Florence. These he etched and published in twenty-six plates, with the title *The Life of the Celebrated Painter Masaccio* (1770).² In 1772 he put out a series of etchings from the paintings of Giotto in the same church.³

Wilhelm Heinse, whom we met above as one of the appreciators of mediæval architecture, again appears among those who, in spite of dependence on Cochin and Mengs, here and there betray a genuine feeling for the art of the early Renaissance. During his visit to Italy (1780–83) he shows a total inability to understand Florentine painting. In his “Augenblickliche Anmerkungen auf meiner sehr schnellen Reise von Rom aus, ferner von Florenz nach Deutschland,” he says (July 28, 1783): “Ihren [i.e., the Florentine] Mahlern fehlt es durchaus an schöner Gestalt und Form, und überhaupt an Verstand ein Ganzes schön und gross hervorzubilden,” etc., etc.⁴ This is quite in accordance with the teaching of Winckelmann. Nevertheless Heinse is the first traveler in Italy who speaks with admiration of the now famous Bellini in S. Zaccaria in Venice:

Der Bellino von S. Zaccaria ist ein sehr interessantes Stück für die Geschichte. Die Venezianische Schule hat einen sehr braven Vorsteher gehabt. In den Figuren ist eine ähnliche Art Stil, wie bey Peter von Perugia, nur noch mehr Wahrheit und etwas Grösseres. Welch' ein

¹ Cf. Rumohr, *Drey Reisen nach Italien* (Leipzig, 1832), pp. 25 ff. Unfortunately, I lack the material to verify these statements made by Rumohr.

² Cf. *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, sub Patch; and John Doran, “*Mann*” and *Manners at the Court of Florence 1740–86* (London, 1776), Vol. II, p. 220.

³ Modern criticism attributes these works to the school of Giotto rather than to the master himself.

⁴ Taken from the MS diary of Heinse as yet unpublished, to part of which I had access through the kindness of Archivrat Schüddekopf, of Weimar.

Kopf ist hier der Alte linker Hand! er würde Tizianen selbst Ehre machen, so kräftig ist er gemahlt und so warm und feurig.¹

To what an extent the interest in early art began to permeate even those circles most deeply affected by Winckelmann and Mengs appears in Goethe, who certainly, at the time of his Italian journey, was the representative *par excellence* of the classical spirit. To be sure, he, like Winckelmann, believed at all times in an ideal of beauty independent of time or nationality, and best represented by the Greeks. Among modern painters, Raphael most nearly attained such perfection. To Goethe, the early advocate of evolution, Raphael's predecessors, also, became interesting:

Um ihn [Raphael] zu erkennen, ihn recht zu schätzen, und ihn auch wieder nicht als einen Gott zu preisen, der wie Melchisedech ohne Vater und Mutter erschiene muss man seine Vorgänger, seinen Meister ansehen. Diese haben auf dem festen Boden der Wahrheit Grund gefasst sie haben die breiten Fundamente, emsig, ja ängstl. gelegt, sie haben mit einander wetteifernd die Pyramide stufenweise in die Höhe gebracht, bis zu letzt er, von allen diesen Vortheilen unterstützt, von einem himmlischen Genius erleuchtet die Spitze der Pyramide, den letzten Stein aufsetzte, über dem kein andrer, neben dem kein andrer stehn kann.²

Among these earlier masters three especially arouse his admiration: Mantegna, and in lesser degree Francia and Perugino. Of Mantegna he says:

In der Kirche der Eremitaner habe ich Gemälde von Mantegna eines der älteren Mahler gesehen vor denen ich erstaunt bin! Was in den Bildern für eine scharfe sichre Gegenwart ist lässt sich nicht ausdrücken. Von dieser ganzen, wahren (nicht scheinbaren, Effectklügenden, zur Imagination sprechenden), derben reinen, lichten, ausführlichen gewissenhaften, zarten, umschriebenen Gegenwart, die zugleich etwas strenges, emsiges, mühsames hatte gingen die folgenden aus wie ich gestern Bilder von Titian sah und konnten durch die Lebhaftigkeit ihres Geistes, die Energie ihrer Natur, erleuchtet von dem Geiste der Alten immer höher und höher steigen sich von der Erde heben und himmlische aber wahre Gestalten hervorbringen. Es ist das die Geschichte der Kunst und jedes der einzelnen grossen ersten Künstler nach der barbarischen Zeit.³

¹ Cf. Jessen, loc. cit., pp. 134 f.

² "Tagebücher und Briefe Goethes aus Italien an Frau von Stein und Herder," *Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft* (Weimar, 1886), p. 187. Cf., too Weimar ed. of Goethe. *Briefe* Vol. VIII, p. 371.

³ Loc. cit., pp. 114 f.

Francia he calls "gar ein respectabler Künstler," and of Perugino he feels tempted to say "eine ehrliche deutsche Haut."¹

It is less surprising that Herder, though at the time indifferent to painting, should in 1789, in a letter from Italy, speak of "alte heilige Anfänge der Kunst," upon viewing, in the Campo Santo in Pisa, the frescoes by Francesco da Volterra, erroneously attributed by him to Giotto.² Had Herder been in a happier mood in Italy, and had he been better prepared to understand Italian art, he might have left us more important comments on the early painters. By temperament he seemed destined to be a pathfinder in this field, as he proved to be in so many others.

Even scholars in criticism, naturally more dependent on convention, began, toward the end of the eighteenth century, to feel the breath of that new spirit which was revolutionizing literature and politics. So Lanzi, in his *Storia pittorica della Italia. Dal risorgimento delle belle arti fin pressso al fine del XVIII secolo*³ has words of warm praise for Giotto, appreciates Masaccio as a great influence in the history of art, notes the beauty of the countenances of Fra Angelico's figures, is not indifferent to Giovanni Bellini's merits. All these men, however, are to him merely the forerunners of the golden age of art. How completely he is on a level with Cochin and Mengs in the essentials of art-criticism comes to the surface in the introduction (p. iii). Here he polemizes against former historians who went into minute details in describing the lives of lesser artists. It is different, he feels, with the "primi lumi dell' arte: in un Raffaello, in un Caracci par che anche le picciole cose prendan grandezza dal soggetto."⁴

Deeply rooted belief in the superiority of the Bolognese

¹ *Loc. cit.*, p. 187. On this subject see also Heusler, *Goethe und die italienische Kunst* (Basel, 1891).

² Cf. Dintzer and F. G. Herder, *Herders Reise nach Italien* (Giessen, 1859), p. 379.

³ Edizione terza, Bassano, 1809.

⁴ Rumohr, in his *Drey Reisen*, claims that Lanzi in the introduction of the first and second editions (1792 and 1796) recommended to young painters the imitation of the older schools. I cannot verify this statement, as these two editions were not accessible to me. The introduction to the third edition contains no such passage.

Lanzi served as a model to Fiorillo, whose aim it was to describe every school of European art. His *Geschichte der zeichnenden Künste von ihrer Wiederaufhebung bis auf die neuesten Zeiten* (Göttingen, 1798-1808) offers, however, nothing of sufficient originality to warrant a detailed treatment.

determines the views of another critic who, far better than even Lanzi, reflects the period of transition. Heinrich Meyer, "Goethe's prime minister in the Republic of Arts," is entirely unknown in English-speaking countries and not yet fairly appreciated even in his own.¹

Meyer based his opinions on what was for the time a very extensive acquaintance with art, ancient and modern. His every word proves a desire for impartiality of judgment. This sense of justice is, however, everywhere coupled with a certain pedantry—his is a heavy flight—and an inability completely to break away from the school in which he was trained. Yet, in spite of faults, he manifests decided originality, and certainly more objectivity than most of his brilliant successors. He makes an effort to do justice to all schools. This ideal becomes manifest

¹ Meyer was a Swiss. From 1778 to 1781 he took lessons in painting from Johann Caspar Füessli in Zürich, the same who had published Winckelmann's letters to his friends in Switzerland and Mengs' *Thoughts on Beauty and Taste in Painting*. So, during the formative years of his life, he came altogether under the spell of the Winckelmann-Mengs influence, which he never quite cast off. In 1784 he went to Italy. When Goethe met him in Rome (1786), Meyer had already made profound studies, and so impressed Goethe that the latter procured him a professorship in the "Freie Zeichenschule" in Weimar (1791). After another trip to Italy (1795-97), undertaken for the express purpose of further art studies, he collaborated with Goethe in an attempt on a large scale to acquaint the German public with all phases of art. Although, in continuance of the teachings of Winckelmann, the art of the ancients furnished the canon of criticism, considerable attention was given to the various phases of modern art. They labored at this task for many years, and in its spirit founded the *Propyläen*. Later their work in modern art was complemented, though in a very different sense, by that of the Schlegels. As Goethe and Meyer were in absolute accord, Meyer's views may be regarded as those of Goethe also, who thus, working constantly with Meyer, obtained a knowledge of Italian art infinitely greater than would appear from a perusal merely of the *Italianische Reise*. Proof of his extraordinary breadth of information on the subject is furnished first of all by the notes taken preparatory to his projected second trip to Italy (cf. Weimar ed. Vol. XXXIV, 2, pp. 192 ff.); furthermore by the appendix to *Benvenuto Cellini*. He here refers to Meyer's essay on Masaccio, and gives a "summarische Übersicht" of the predecessors of Cellini, in which men like Cimabue, Giotto, and especially Masaccio, are praised—yet regarded always as merely the forerunners of the great masters. In the *Geschichte der Farbentehre: Geschichte des Kolorits seit Wiederherstellung der Kunst* he exhibited an astonishing acquaintance with even minute details of Italian painting. Not one of his contemporaries, in fact, controlled a greater amount of material than Goethe. Yet that he never outgrew Meyer's point of view is proved even in essays showing such mature and delicate insight as the one on Lionardi da Vinci's "Last Supper" (written 1818). Here Lionardi's predecessors and contemporaries are characterized as artists who worked "trefflich aber unbewusst . . . Wahrheit und Natürlichkeit hat jeder im Auge, aber eine lebendige Einheit fehlt," etc. (cf. Hempel, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 503 f.). Even in the article on Mantegna's "Triumph of Cæsar" (written in 1823)—that masterpiece of interpretation—the epoch which produced M. is called one in which "eine sich entwickelnde höchste Kunst über ihr Wollen und Vermögen sich noch nicht deutliche Rechenschaft ablegen konnte" (cf. Hempel, Vol. XXVIII, p. 484). In 1826 he writes to Zelter, calling Giotto a "sinnlich-bildlich bedeutend wirkende Genius" (cf. *Briefwechsel zwischen Goethe und Zelter*, Vol. IV, p. 280).

even in an early essay, entitled *Beiträge zur Geschichte der neueren bildenden Kunst*.¹ Here Meyer gives a short survey of the growth of Italian painting, speaks of the importance of Giotto, then touches upon Donatello, Ghiberti, Masaccio, and Brunelleschi—the most interesting representatives of what to him is merely an epoch of transition. He next adds a very short statement of the main facts of the history of Venetian painting—Giovanni Bellini is to him the first important figure; and lastly adds a few words on the “Roman” and “Lombard” schools. To the latter, we are informed, the Carracci and their disciples gave immortal luster. All these statements reflect, with slight modifications, the views of Meyer’s contemporaries. He closes his essay, however, with a more detailed discussion of three artists—insignificant or even contemptible to the public of Cochin and Mengs: Bellini, Perugino, and Mantegna. With these, he evidently feels, his readers should be better acquainted. Bellini is no great genius,

hingegen ist er gemässigt, stille, immer nüchtern, ein unbestechlicher Freund der Natur und der Wahrheit . . . Einfalt und Innigkeit schmücken alle seine Bilder, und darum sind auch selbst die aus den frühern Jahren gefällig, ungeachtet sie noch in der alten trocknen Manier gearbeitet sind.

He subjoins a description of several of Bellini’s works, among them the one in the sacristy of the Frari church and the one in S. Zaccaria, both in Venice. In the latter we find “grösseren und edleren Geschmack,” in spite of occasional traces of the old style. Bellini’s art reached its climax, however, in the “Christ at Emmaus.”² Though Perugino, Meyer continues, remained more faithful to the old style, he deserves appreciation for re-introducing into painting some of that beauty and grace which had so long been absent from it. Raphael himself owed much of his greatness to Perugino. Again Meyer adds a description of several paintings. In Mantegna’s style Meyer praises “äusserste Bestimmtheit.” His earliest works are “hart, aber in einem hohen Grade geistreich” (a characteristic adjective for the critic of a

¹ Cf. Schiller’s *Horen* for 1795, neuntes Stück.

² In S. Salvatore in Venice. It is doubtful to modern criticism whether this painting is by Bellini.

time which knew *Kunstverstand*, but was but little acquainted with *Kunstgefühl*). Nevertheless, Mantegna never rose completely above the "Dürftigkeit und enge Beschränkung" of the older period and into untrammelled imitation of beauty. To prove his point, Meyer adds descriptions of some of Mantegna's characteristic productions.

To one familiar with modern views a few dry chapters on early masters must seem unsatisfactory indeed. Yet Meyer's essay is epoch-making in the history of art-criticism as probably the earliest systematic attempt on the part of a critic of the academic school to arouse interest in neglected artists. In 1800 Meyer complemented this essay by another, entitled "Mantua im Jahre 1795,"¹ in which he takes occasion to speak in terms of praise of various works of Mantegna.

In the same year (1800) he had published a more pretentious treatise, entitled "Masaccio,"² which aimed to explain the position of Masaccio in the history of painting, and in which he therefore sketches the work of leading men before and after the author of the Carmine frescoes. In Giotto's pictures

ging eine neue Welt auf, sie gefallen wegen der Einfalt in der Darstellung, wegen der Naivität ihrer Motive, obschon das Vermögen nachzuahmen gering, der Ausdruck schwach ist, und wissenschaftliche Kenntnisse gänzlich fehlen.

He adds, however:

Ein überall durchscheinendes grosses Talent gewinnt unsere Zuneigung, und vergütet dasjenige reichlich was die strenge Kritik, gegen die Unvollkommenheit der Ausführung einzuwenden haben möchte.

Other masters, like Memmi, Gaddi, Orcagna, could not, Meyer insists, in spite of their improvements, rise "bis zum Schönen oder auch nur bis zum Zierlichen der Form." To make clear Masaccio's superiority over his predecessors, Meyer gives an appreciative description of some of Masaccio's frescoes. As, however, the full value of that painter can be understood only by a knowledge of his influence on the coming generation, Meyer next turns to a discussion of Fra Filippo Lippi, Botticelli and Ghirlandajo. The two last-named—Meyer treats them together—aimed at the rep-

¹ *Propyläen*, Vol. III, zweites Stück.

² *Ibid* erstes Stück.

resentation of "das Natürliche." They were often "überschwenglich reich an Sachen," "doch macht die fromme Unschuld und naive Anspruchlosigkeit in ihrem Wesen, dass sie . . . durch Einfalt gefallen." Ghirlandajo ist "äusserst wahrhaft." For Perugino Meyer claims "keiner hat mehr Gemüth und Innigkeit seinen Werken zu geben gewusst." All these artists learned from Masaccio. After him art improved technically, but lost "von Seiten des geistigen, bedeutenden Inhalts." He concludes with comments on Mantegna, Giovanni Bellini, Lionardo, and several masters of the High Renaissance.

We miss in this treatise the names of Fra Angelico and Luca Signorelli, and therefore cannot claim for its author a mature grasp on the evolution of Italian painting. Its peculiar significance, however, lies in the degree of feeling shown for the charm of simplicity—an appreciation prophetic of the tenets of a new school of criticism, hostile in all respects to Cochin and Mengs.

How Janus-faced Meyer was in his views, how original, and yet how dependent on the age of rationalism, shows most clearly in his *Entwurf einer Kunstgeschichte des 18. Jahrhunderts*.¹ In it, by way of introduction, he sketches the history of art in the seventeenth century. Here the Bolognese are praised as warmly and as foolishly as ever they had been by former critics. Domenichino is "der edelste Sprössling der Carraccischen Schule," Guercino is conspicuous for "grosse Wirkung und naive Wahrheit" (!), and Guido for "die heitere Weise und wunderbare Meisterschaft seiner Behandlung." But even Meyer cannot abide Pietro da Cortona. In another place Meyer brands Giotto's works as "kunstlos;" nevertheless, he admits one finds in them "Gedanken, die ohne alle Schlacken sind, des grössten Künstlers der gebildeten Zeiten nicht unwerth." He even once speaks of "Giotto's und Gaddis Geist, Orcagnas Ernst und Tiefsinn, da Fiesoles Frömmigkeit, Ghirlandajos Wahrheit."² Nowhere in Meyer's essays is found any concession to the principle, which at the time was being made popular by Wackenroder and Fr. Schlegel, accord-

¹ It appeared together with Goethe's *Winckelmann und sein Jahrhundert* (Tübingen, 1805).

² In notes in MS dealing with "Geschichte der Kunst" (found in the Goethe-Schiller Archiv in Weimar), Meyer remarks on Fra Angelico: "Andacht, Innigkeit und reine kindliche Einfalt sprechen wunderbar anmuthig aus seinen Werken."

ing to which only religious art can lay claim to true inspiration and poetic worth. The child of rationalism could never have conceived such a notion and later even turned against it with severity,¹ when it threatened to control all criticism. Yet even Meyer himself once, at least, lapsed into a mood which strongly flavors of the ideas of the *Klosterbruder*. In a contribution to the *Propyläen*, entitled "Ueber Lehranstalten zu Gunsten der bildenden Künste," he says:

Wie günstig der christlich-religiöse Antrieb auf die bildenden Künste gewirkt hat, erhellet ferner daraus, dass sobald derselbe anfang schwächer zu werden, sie auch ihr höchstes Ziel erreicht hatten. Von dieser Zeit an suchten sie zu gefallen, oder eigentlich zu blenden und erhielten sich nur noch durch den Hang zur Pracht und Verschwendung.²

This from the worshiper of Domenichino and Guercino! Surely, the generation was feeling the breath of a new *Weltanschauung*.

And yet to what an extent dependence on the old standards prevailed far into the nineteenth century, and controlled persons very much more fierce and revolutionary of temperament than Meyer, is attested by certain essays by Stendhal.³ In his *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* (1817) he reflects a point of view akin, in spite of differences, to that of Meyer. For, like him, he continues the tradition of admiration for the Bolognese, but he exhibits genuine and often intelligent interest in the men of the early Renaissance. Thus, Cimabue's figures at times betray "une expression étonnante." Giotto even went beyond his master, as evidenced, for instance, by the frescoes in Assisi. Yet, on the whole, "ses tableaux ont l'air barbare." Masaccio appears to him "homme de génie, et qui a fait époque dans l'histoire de l'art." It is the virility of the man which appeals to this forerunner of Nietzsche. Like Lanzi, he calls Fra Angelico, because of his

¹ In his essay *Neu-deutsche religioſ-patriotische Kunst*. Of all this more later.

² *Propyläen*, 1799, zweites Stück.

³ Henri Beyle, known in literature as Stendhal (1783-1842), lived in Milan from 1814-1821, and later became French consul in Trieste and in Civit  Vecchia. He was passionately fond of Italy, and even preferred the Italians to his own countrymen. His chief importance lies less in his treatises on art than in his novels. For he is the forerunner of Balzac and Flaubert. I used for the *Histoire de la peinture en Italie* the "seule  dition compl te, enti rement revue et corrig e" (Paris, 1868); for the *M langes d'art et de litt rature*, the edition Paris, 1867; for *Rome, Naples et Florence*, the edition Paris, 1865; for *Promenades dans Rome*, the "seule  dition compl te, augment e de pr f ces, et de fragments enti rement in dits" (Paris, 1873).

sweetness, the "Guido Reni" of his time, but he is too "Giottoesque" to be the equal of Masaccio. Benozzo Gozzoli and Filippo Lippi appeal to him much more forcibly; nevertheless, the century which they represent is to Stendhal, as it was to Lanzi, merely a period of preparation. But he felt that toward its close there were symptoms of an advance, as proved by the character of some of the side-wall pictures of the Sistine Chapel. Thus Stendhal became a leader in the revival of interest in those works so unjustly overlooked by generations of critics and travelers. Like Cochin, and even like Ruskin in his youth, Stendhal has little enthusiasm for Botticelli. On the other hand, he finds kindred souls in Ghirlandajo and Luca Signorelli because of their realistic power. It must, therefore, be a subject of wonder that the marrowless skill of the Bolognese should appeal to him, as is apparent in his *Rome, Naples and Florence* (1817). Less strange is it that Cochin and his whole fabric of the *bon goût* should cease to be for Stendhal the last court of appeal, should even offer elements of amusement.¹

In Heinse, in Lanzi, in Meyer, and in Stendhal the rationalistic instinct successfully represses the romantic, and all do homage to the tradition which placed the Bolognese in the front rank of artists. The first to protest against such veneration was one of the most distinguished personalities in the art-life of England, Sir Joshua Reynolds. This great portrait-painter, we saw, was one of the path-finders in the appreciation of Michel Angelo's greatness. Strength appealed to him, and mincing sentimentality was foreign to him. Hence it happened that he became the first among critics to deal a severe blow to that school whose exaggerated sweetness had delighted the age of Samuel Richardson and of Gessner. In the fifteenth "discourse," delivered before the Royal Academy in London as early as 1790—in other words, before Lanzi and Meyer had put themselves on record—he declared:

The Caracci, it is acknowledged, adopted the mechanical part with sufficient success. But the divine part which addresses itself to the imagination, as possessed by Michael Angelo and Tibaldi (!), was beyond

¹ Cf. review, written in 1835, of Colomb's *Journal d'un voyage en Italie en 1828*, found in the volume entitled *Mélanges d'art et de littérature*.

their grasp; they formed, however, a most respectable school, a style more on the level, and calculated for a greater number.¹

This utterance furnishes proof that before the end of the eighteenth century the time was becoming ripe for a school of criticism which would look for the "divine part" of painting far more than for the mechanical.

Indeed, at the very time when Reynolds thus expressed his dissatisfaction with the Carracci, a movement was being started in another part of Europe which ultimately swept away the rationalistic formula and established altogether new ideals.

Heinrich Meyer, the writer who occupied us above, tells us in his essay "Neu-deutsche, religios-patriotische Kunst,"² that about 1790 a strong interest in the older, simpler, and more religious masters arose among the German painters in Rome as a reaction against Mengs. Meyer says:

Von unserm Tischbein,³ woferne wir nicht sehr irren, ist nun zu allererst grössere Werthschätzung der ältern, vor Raphaels Zeit blühenden Maler ausgegangen. Dem Natürlichen, dem Einfachen hold, betrachtete er mit Vergnügen die wenigen in Rom vorhandenen Malereyen des Perugino, Bellini und Mantegna, pries ihre Verdienste und spendete vielleicht die Kunstgeschichte nicht gehörig beachtend, vielleicht nicht hinreichend mit derselben bekannt, ein allzufreygebiges Lob dem weniger geistreichen Pinturicchio der mit seinen Werken so manche Wand überdeckt hat. Tischbein und seinen Freunden wurde bald auch die von Masaccio ausgemalte Capelle in der Kirche St. Clemente bekannt. Zu gleicher Zeit forschte der gelehrte Hirt die in Vergessenheit gerathenen Malereyen des da Fiesole im Vatikan wieder aus, und Lips stach Umrisse von zwey solchen Gemälden in Kupfer.⁴ Wiewohl nun das eben erzählte

¹Cf. *Works*, Vol. II, p. 109.

²First printed in Goethe's periodical *Ueber Kunst und Alterthum in den Rhein- und Mayn- Gegenden* for 1817, Heft 2, pp. 5-62 and 133-62; reprinted in Seuffert's *Neudrucke*, Vol. XXV, pp. 97 ff.

³Johann Heinrich Wilhelm Tischbein (1751-1829), the same of whom we heard above as one of the "discoverers" of the dome of Milan, belonged to a well-known family of painters. He is the author of the famous portrait of Goethe in Italy. In Rome, where he resided for many years, he became closely associated with Goethe. In 1787 he moved to Naples, and from 1808 until his death he lived in Eutin. On Tischbein cf., too, Jul. Vogel, *Aus Goethes Römischen Tagen* (Leipzig, 1905), pp. 98 ff.

⁴This statement is corroborated by a letter of Hirt to Goethe, written August 23, 1788 (cf. *Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft*, Band V [Weimar, 1890], p. 53): "Ich habe bereits alle Artikel für das erste Heft der periodischen Schrift fertig, die Herr Professor Moritz und ich zusammen herausgeben wollen [i. e., *Italien und Deutschland*]. Lips hat auch schon eine Platte hiezu gestochen, nemlich die Predigt aus der Kapelle des Fra Giovanni Angelico von Fiesole, wovon ich die Beschreibung machte." Hirt means the chapel of Nicholas V in the

auf wachgewordenes Interesse für die Werke des ältern Styls hindeutet, so hatten dieselben doch damals noch keinen Einfluss auf die Ausübung der Kunst, niemand betrachtete sie als Muster, oder wählte durch Nachahmung derselben den wahren Geschmack zu erlangen.¹ Ein bedenkliches erregendes Symptom aufkeimender Vorliebe für solche ältere Art, äusserte sich jedoch darin, dass gar viele Künstler, zumal unter den jüngeren, Raphaels nie unterbrochenes Fortschreiten in der Kunst ablängneten, die Gemälde von der sogenannten zweyten Manier dieses Meisters, z. B. die Grablegung, die Disputa u. a. den späterverfertigten vorziehen wollten. Unter seinen Arbeiten im Vatikan wurde daher die genannte Disputa am häufigsten von Studirenden nachgezeichnet, auch genossen die Werke des da Vinci grössere Verehrung, als zuvor; . . . Dessgleichen wuchs die Gunst für die Arbeiten des Garofalo; hingegen gerieth die Achtung für Carraccische Werke ins Abnehmen, Guido Reni verlor ebenfalls sein lange behauptetes Ansehen immer mehr.

So ungefähr war es zu Rom mit den Geschmacks-Neigungen der Künstler und Kunstliebhaber, vornehmlich derer von deutscher Zunge, bis um das Jahr 1790 beschaffen.² . . . Um diese Zeit unternahm der Maler Büri, von Rom aus, eine Reise nach Venedig und durch die Lombardie über Florenz wieder zurück. Er hatte zu Venedig und Mantua die Werke des Bellini und des Mantegna fleissig aufgesucht, betrachtet, auch einige derselben nachgezeichnet, ein gleiches geschah von ihm zu Florenz mit Gemälden des da Fiesole und anderer alten Meister. Bey seiner Wiederkunft nach Rom gedachte er gegen Kunstverwandte der geschauten Dinge mit grossem Lob und beglaubigte solches durch die gefertigten Zeichnungen.³ Dieses bloss zufällige Ereigniss hat, nach

Vatican, in which are the famous frescoes by Fra Angelico; one of these—and perhaps the most beautiful—represents St. Stephen preaching. Many years later Hirt told Rumohr, the art-critic, of his discovery; cf. Rumohr's *Italienische Forschungen* (of which more later), Vol. II, p. 255 and note. (On Hirt cf., too, J. Vogel, *op. cit.*, pp. 243 ff., also p. 319; cf., too, Goethe's letter to Wieland, Weimar ed. of Goethe, *ibid.*, pp. 60 ff.

¹ Rumohr evidently exaggerates when he claims (*Drey Reisen* [1832], p. 26) that Lanzi "hat vor etwa fünfunddreissig Jahren [i. e., about 1797] bei den Deutschen, welche damals in Rom studirten, zuerst für die Kunst des Mittelalters diejenige Achtung, bald Verehrung angeregt, welche die Kunstfreunde [i. e., Goethe and Meyer] unter die frühesten Symptome der bevorstehenden Umwälzung versetzen." The first edition of Lanzi's book did not appear until 1792, and we just saw that as early as 1788 Hirt was calling attention to the artistic importance of Fra Angelico. There is no reason for doubting, however, that Lanzi later greatly encouraged the German artists in Rome in their predilection for the works of the Early Renaissance, by his belief, mentioned above, that modern artists would profit by an imitation of older models.

² Meyer's date is slightly incorrect. There is no evidence that contempt for the Bolognese became manifest in this circle before 1790. It would seem more probable that such heretical ideas were not entertained until after the return of Bury from Florence.

³ Bury (not Büri, as Meyer calls him) himself writes of his impressions in the North in a letter to Goethe dated Florence, September 2, 1790 (cf. *Schriften der Goethe-Gesellschaft*, Vol. V, pp. 208 f.): "In der Gallerie ist bis jetzo mein Aufenthalt gewesen, und eine hübsche Zeichnung nach einem Gemählde von Frate gemacht (*sic*), 6 Portraits nach der hiesigen Künstler-Sammlung und viele Ideen von verschiedenen Meistern, aber die Hauptsache

unserm Dafürhalten, vielen Einfluss auf den Gang des Geschmacks gehabt; denn von derselben Zeit an sprach sich die Vorliebe für alte Meister, zumal für die der florentinischen Schule, immer entschiedener aus. Die vorerwähnten Freskogemälde des da Fiesole im Vatikan, wie auch die des Masaccio in der Kirche St. Clemente erhielten classisches Ansehen, das heisst: sie wurden nicht nur als ehrenwerthe Denkmale der emporstrebenden Kunst betrachtet, sondern von den Künstlern nun als musterhaft studirt und nachgezeichnet. Ferner wählte man, in der Absicht sich näher an Kunst und Geist der ältern Schulen und Meister anzuschliessen, für neu zu erzeugende Werke die Gegenstände schon häufiger aus der Bibel.

Einer der vorzüglichsten der auf diesem Wege sich bemühenden war Wächter aus Stuttgart, welcher mit lieblichen Gemälden heiliger Familien, wobey ihm Garofalo schien zum Muster gedient zu haben, mit einem Hiob u. a. m. grosses Lob bey Gleichgesinnten erwarb.¹

In spite of tendencies to the contrary, "pflanzte sich die Neigung zum Geschmack der ältern Meister vor Raphael, immer wachsend fort und erhielt durch die vom Calmücken Feodor in Umrissen nach Lorenzo Ghiberti radirte bronzene Thüre am Battisterium zu Florenz neue Nahrung." Meyer next speaks of the influence of Wackenroder's *Herzensergiessungen*, a book of which we shall presently hear more, and then adds:

Es fügte sich ferner dass, als nach den bekannten unruhigen Ereignissen, Rom, im Jahre 1798, von den Franzosen besetzt wurde, viele Künstler, um Beschwerlichkeiten und Störungen auszuweichen, sich von dort wegbegaben und, durch die Umstände genöthigt, Florenz zu ihrem Aufenthalt wählten, wo sie Gelegenheit fanden mit den ältern und ältesten Meistern dieser berühmten Kunstschule besser bekannt zu werden als in Rom hätte geschehen können. Giotto, die Gaddi, Orgagna,

ist mein Mantegna; ich kann Ihnen gar nicht sagen, wie mich der Mensch durch seine Bestimmtheit an sich gezogen; kein alter Florentiner kommt ihm mit all seinem grandiosen Wesen bei; denn dieselben haben es öfters mit ihren allzu grossen Falten übertrieben; es sind hier drey Gemälde von Mantegna, ich glaube nicht, dass Sie dieselben wegen der vielen Sachen in der Gallerie recht beobachtet haben, sonst hätten Sie mir in Mantua davon gesprochen; dieselben hab ich aufs aller bestimmteste gemacht, und Sie sollen sehen, wenn Sie die Zeichnungen bekommen, dass man nicht weiter kann wegen der Ideen; denn auch alle andern Meister, welche dieselben Sujets gemacht, sind weit unter ihm; ich fühle, dass mich Mantegna auf einen Weg geführt, welcher freilich im Anfang etwas mühsam ist, aber unfehlbar etwas guts dabey herauskommen muss, und in Rom, welche ich fast nicht erwarten kann, einige Proben geben will (*sic*)."¹ Bury himself was interested in the Carracci (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 12, 222, 223). For Goethe's feelings in regard to Bury, cf. Weimar ed., *Briefe*, Vol. VIII, pp. 329 f., 356, 378 f.; cf. also Jul. Vogel, *op. cit.*, pp. 130 f.).

¹ Wächter was for a time the representative of German classicism in painting. He will interest us later as the one who probably transmitted to Overbeck the theories of the Tischbein-Bury group. On Wächter cf. *Allg. Dtsch. Biog.*

selbst andere von geringerm Namen und Verdienst, wie Buffalmacco, kamen dadurch, vielleicht in übertriebenem Masse, zu Ehren und manches ihrer noch übrigen, lange nicht mehr beachteten Werke wurde jetzt zum Studium und Muster von Künstlern erkoren, welche kurz vorher noch den Coloss des Phidias vor Augen gehabt.¹

In Tischbein and Bury, then, we have that preference for simplicity and naïveté of spirit which in future years was in so large a measure to control criticism in all countries. "The Spite of the Proud," as Ruskin later put it, is carefully to be shunned, and "simple and unlearned men," again to use one of Ruskin's telling phrases, are held superior to brilliant technicians and magnificent men of the world. The new principle implied in the views of the German artists—original as it is—is but a translation into the field of art of the gospel of the "simple life" enunciated by Rousseau and by the *Lyrical Ballads*.

Nevertheless, let us remember that, outside of this small circle, the old rationalistic formula—the rule of *Kunstverstand* as opposed to *Kunstgefühl*—still held almost paramount sway. The tenacious adherence to the old tenets on the part of Meyer, and especially of so rebellious a temperament as Stendhal, is the best case in point. A new evangel, one absolutely subvertive of all time-hallowed theories of criticism, was necessary finally and forever to break the yoke of Cochin and Mengs. It was enunciated in a little publication entitled *Herzensergiessungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders* (Berlin, 1797).² The author who,

¹There is no good reason for doubting the authenticity of Meyer's statements, though here and there his memory may have failed him in detail. Contemporary evidence, as far as I can judge with the material at hand, seems everywhere to corroborate him. According to what we saw above, Meyer strains a point when he claims that a better appreciation of the old masters started with Tischbein, although he doubtless was the first person whose influence in this direction was felt in artistic circles. Tischbein himself, in the second volume of his *Aus meinem Leben*, commenting on the greatness of Lionardo, maintains that before the author of the "Ultima Cena" the art of painting "lag gefangen und konnte nicht aufstreben." Lionardo freed it. After him came Michel Angelo, Titian, Raphael, Correggio, the Carracci, Guido, etc. But he adds: "Ich will hiermit nicht sagen, dass vor Leonardo nichts gutes gemalt sei;" only "die Künstler malten wie nach ausgeschnittenen Mustern, die sie nur auflegten, umschrieben und ausfüllten, oder als wäre es nach Schatten an der Wand gezeichnet und dann colorirt; so flach sind die Figuren auf der Tafel . . . Doch findet man sehr scharf gezeichnete, schöne Marienköpfe und Engel aus jener Zeit. Selbst einige Mosaiken sind ihrer Einfachheit und Grösse, sowie ihres Contoures wegen achtungswerth, obwohl trocken und armselig." All this hardly sounds like the talk of a rebel. We shall presently see, however, that the suggestions thrown out by Tischbein were to be carried farther than he himself intended, perhaps, by bolder minds than his.

²Cf. article on Wackenroder, *Allg. Dtsch. Biog.* (by Sulger-Gebing); also introduction by K. D. Jessen to his reprint of the *Herzensergiessungen* (Leipzig, 1904); also Koldewey,

in his rôle of a monk, pretends to give nothing more than the outpourings of his heart, views art essentially from the religious point of view:

Ich vergleiche den Genuss der edleren Kunstwerke dem Gebet Eben so nun, meyne ich, müsse man mit den Meisterstücken der Kunst umgehen, um sie würdiglich zum Heil seiner Seele zu nutzen. Es ist frevelhaft zu nennen, wenn jemand in einer irdischen Stunde, von dem schallenden Gelächter seiner Freunde hinwegtaumelt, um in einer nahen Kirche, aus Gewohnheit, einige Minuten mit Gott zu reden. Ein ähnlicher Frevel ist es, in einer solchen Stunde die Schwelle des Hauses zu betreten, wo die bewundernswürdigsten Schöpfungen, die von Menschenhänden hervorgebracht werden konnten, als eine stille Kundschaft für die Würde dieses Geschlechtes für die Ewigkeit aufbewahret werden. Harret, wie beym Gebet, auf die seligen Stunden, da die Gunst des Himmels euer Inneres mit höherer Offenbarung erleuchtet; nur dann wird eure Seele sich mit den Werken der Künstler zu Einem Ganzen vereinigen. Ihre Zaubergestalten sind stumm und verschlossen, wenn ihr sie kalt anseht; euer Herz muss sie zuerst mächtiglich anreden, wenn sie sollen zu euch sprechen, und ihre ganze Gewalt an euch versuchen können.

Kunstwerke passen in ihrer Art so wenig, als der Gedanke an Gott in den gemeinen Fortfluss des Lebens; sie gehen über das Ordentliche und Gewöhnliche hinaus, und wir müssen uns mit vollem Herzen zu ihnen erheben, um sie in unsern, von den Nebeln der Atmosphäre allzuoft getrübbten Augen, zu dem zu machen, was sie, ihrem hohen Wesen nach, sind. . . . Es ist mir ein heiliger Feyertag, an welchem ich mit Ernst und mit vorbereitetem Gemüth an die Betrachtung edler Kunstwerke gehe; ich kehre oft und unaufhörlich zu ihnen zurück, sie bleiben meinem Sinne fest eingeprägt, und ich trage sie, so lange ich auf Erden wandle, in meiner Einbildungskraft, zum Trost und zur Erweckung meiner Seele, gleichsam als geistige Amulete mit mir herum, und werde sie mit ins Grab nehmen.¹

As a result of this attitude, he points to the old Italian masters as praiseworthy examples:

Sie machten die Mahlerkunst zur treuen Dienerinn der Religion, und wussten nichts von dem eitlen Farbenprunk der heutigen Künstler: ihre Bilder, in Kapellen und an Altären, gaben dem, der davor kniete und betete, die heiligsten Gesinnungen ein. . . . Ein andrer, Fra Giovanni

Wackenroder und sein Einfluss auf Tieck (Leipzig, 1904); also Helene Stöcker *Zur Kunstanschauung des 18ten Jahrhunderts*, pp. 86 ff. Cf., too, R. Muther, *The History of Modern Painting* (London, 1895), Vol. I, pp. 209 ff.

¹Jessen's reprint, pp. 100 ff.

Angelico da Fiesole, Mahler und Dominikanermönch zu Florenz, war wegen seines strengen und gottesfürchtigen Lebens besonders berühmt. Er kümmerte sich gar nicht um die Welt, schlug sogar die Würde eines Erzbischoffs aus, die der Pabst ihm antrug, und lebte immer still, ruhig, demüthig und einsam. Jedesmal, bevor er zu mahlen anfang, pflegte er zu beten; dann ging er ans Werk, und führte es aus wie der Himmel es ihm eingegeben hatte, ohne weiter darüber zu klügeln oder zu kritisiren. Das Mahlen war ihm eine heilige Bussübung; und manchmal, wenn er Christi Leiden am Kreuze mahlte, sah man während der Arbeit grosse Thränen über sein Gesicht fließen.—Das alles ist nicht ein schönes Märchen, sondern die reine Wahrheit.¹

Here at last we find *Kunstgefühl* as opposed to *Kunstverstand*. In fact, it may be proved that Wackenroder's knowledge of the old masters was slender indeed. This book, which was soon to make a deep impression—upon Germany at least—marks the entrance into art-criticism of the principle, later so potent in Schlegel, Rio, and Ruskin, which claims that true art can never be divorced from religion. This principle, though at the time productive of important results in criticism, was, because of its essential unsoundness, later to lead—as, for instance, in Ruskin—to confusion and narrowness.

Wackenroder, retiring, hypersensitive, but meagerly acquainted with Italian painting, was ill equipped for the task of compelling a generation trained by Mengs and Meyer to accept principles so new, so perplexing, so uncomfortable. A different personality was needed to perform this task—one aggressive, turbulent, with a wider range of acquaintance in art, yet Wackenroder's equal in capacity of feeling: Friedrich Schlegel. In 1802, the very year in which Chateaubriand published the *Génie du Christianisme*, Friedrich Schlegel went to Paris. Napoleon had made of his capital the greatest art center of the world by carrying thither the spoils of Italy. In this fashion Schlegel came in contact with much of the best pictorial work of the world. As a result of this visit, he published his "Nachricht von den Gemälden in Paris,"² con-

¹ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 141 f. In Tieck and Wackenroder's *Phantasieen über die Kunst* we find the same views, derived this time from a study of Dürer's art. "Aus solchen Beispielen wird man ersehen, dass wo Kunst und Religion sich vereinigen, aus ihren zusammenfließenden Strömen der schönste Lebensstrom sich ergiesst" (cf. "Tieck u. Wackenroder," Kürschner's *Deutsche National-Litteratur*, Vol. CXLV, p. 13).

² *Europa*, Vol. I (Frankfurt a. M., 1803), erstes Stück, pp. 108-57

tinued under the title "Vom Raphael,"¹ and furthermore under the title "Nachtrag italiänischer Gemählde;"² and further continued under the title "Zweiter Nachtrag alter Gemählde;"³ and again as "Dritter Nachtrag alter Gemählde."⁴ Here Schlegel roundly declares:

Ich habe durchaus nur Sinn für die alte Malerei, nur diese verstehe ich und begreife ich, und nur über diese kann ich reden . . . Und doch gesteh ichs, dass die kalte Grazie des Guido nicht viel Anziehendes für mich hat, und dass mich das Rosen- und Milch-glänzende Fleisch des Dominichino mit nichten bezaubert . . . Gewänder und Costume, die mit zu den Menschen zu gehören scheinen, so schlicht und naiv als diese; in den Gesichtern (der Stelle, wo das Licht des göttlichen Maler-geistes am hellsten durchscheint) aber, bei aller Mannichfaltigkeit des Ausdrucks oder Individualität der Züge durchaus und überall jene kindliche, gutmüthige Einfalt und Beschränktheit, die ich geneigt bin, für den ursprünglichen Charakter der Menschen zu halten; das ist der Styl der alten Malerei, der Styl, der mir, ich bekenne hierin meine Einseitigkeit, ausschliessend gefällt, wenn nicht irgend ein grosses Princip, wie beim Corregio oder Raphael, die Ausnahme rechtfertigt.⁵

Friedrich's famous "göttliche Grobheit" never made a deeper impression than by some of these utterances which slapped all traditional criticism in the face. But Friedrich was not satisfied with attacking, he wished to teach. He writes: . . . "die stille, süsse Schönheit des Johannes Bellin oder des Perugino geht mir über alles." And then he proceeds to discuss works by these artists and their contemporaries, as for instance Mantegna.⁶ But this great admiration does not in Schlegel stifle appreciation of Raphael, nor of Correggio and Titian. Not even Giulio Romano, the pet aversion of Rio and Ruskin, altogether meets with his censure.

¹ *Europa*, Vol. I, zweites Stück, pp. 3-19.

² *Ibid.*, Vol. II (1803), pp. 96-116.

³ *Ibid.*, zweites Stück, pp. 1-41.

⁴ *Loc. cit.*, pp. 109-45. These essays were reprinted with modifications of wording and with additions, with the title "Gemähldebeschreibungen aus Paris und den Niederlanden, in den Jahren 1802-1804," in the *Sämmtliche Werke*, Vol. VI (Wien, 1823), pp. 1-220. For further reference cf. Sulger-Gebing, *Die Brüder A. W. und F. Schlegel in ihrem Verhältnisse zur bildenden Kunst* (München, 1897).

⁵ *Europa*, Vol. I, 1, pp. 113 f. It is not unworthy of note that this essay, together with those on "Gothic Architecture," one on "Schloss Karlstein bey Prag," and one on "Die heilige Cäcilia von Ludwig Schnorr," contained in Vol. VI of the *Werke*, appear under the collective title "Ansichten und Ideen von der christlichen Kunst." Rio, and after him Ruskin, were later to make the world familiar with the appellation "Christian art," so new in this large application to eighteenth century readers.

⁶ *Loc. cit.*, p. 115.

Schlegel's plea for the less pretentious artists of the older school corresponds to the principles enunciated a few years before him by the German artists in Rome. Even stronger deviations from the views of Meyer appear in passages which more clearly reflect the influence of Wackenroder. For what in Wackenroder was merely a childlike outpouring of feeling became, in the case of the Schlegels, the very corner-stone of their system of criticism. Their brilliant championship made them the true founders of that school which held sway until comparatively recent years. Friedrich Schlegel maintains:

Die Kunst aber, und die Religion von der sie nie getrennt werden kann ohne sich selbst zu verlieren, sollen dem Menschen nicht allein das Göttliche andeuten, wie er es rein von allen Verhältnissen und im heitern Frieden sich denken und ahnden kann, sondern auch in seinem beschränkten Verhältniss wie das Göttliche selbst im irdischen Daseyn noch durchbricht und auch da erscheint; . . . eigentlich fodern sollte man aber von einem Kunstwerke nicht Reiz und Schönheit, sondern nur die hohe, ja göttliche Bedeutung, weil es ohne diese gar kein Kunstwerk zu heissen verdient, und mit dieser die Anmuth als Blüthe und Lohn der göttlichen Liebe sich oftmals von selbst einstellt. Dieser hohen, tiefen Bedeutung aber sind die Martyria gewiss in einem ganz eminenten Grade fähig; wann der Mahler das Ekelhafte zu vermeiden weiss, so wird es ihm leicht werden, in diesem Gemisch von reinen und liebevollen Charakteren . . . ein nur allzuwahres Bild von dem Trauerspiel des wirklichen Lebens zu entwerfen, und dem Geschick, was die reinere Natur im menschlichen Verhältnisse meistens erwartet; wobei er, wenn er sonst will, immer noch Gelegenheit genug finden wird, uns an die höchste Schönheit und Liebe zu erinnern.¹

In every respect, then, the older painters, meaning the fore-runners of Raphael, should be regarded as furnishing the proper models. In them is found what we lack: "das religiöse Gefühl, Andacht und Liebe, und die innigste stille Begeisterung derselben war es, was den alten Malern die Hand führte;" and, significantly for a German romanticist to whom philosophy was tantamount to religion, he adds:

und nur bei einigen wenigen ist auch das hinzugekommen oder an die Stelle getreten, was allein das religiöse Gefühl in der Kunst einiger-massen ersetzen kann; das tiefe Nachsinnen, das Streben nach einer

¹ *Europa*, Vol. II, 2, pp. 16 f.

ernsten und würdigen Philosophie, die in den Werken des Leonardo und des Dürer sich freilich nach Künstlerweise, doch ganz deutlich meldet.¹ Is ever a great painter to arise in modern times? It is improbable, but not impossible. If so, religious feeling must again enter into art. "Vergebens sucht ihr die Mahlerkunst wieder hervorzu-rufen, wenn nicht erst Religion oder philosophische Mystik wenigstens die Idee derselben wieder hervorgerufen hat."² In lieu of religion, a few of the poets, supposedly tinged with mysticism—for to a Schlegel, even Shakespeare comes under this head—may become the inspiration of painters.

Weniger die griechische Dichtkunst, die sie doch nur ins Fremde und Gelehrte verleitet, und die sie nur in Uebersetzungen lesen, wo vor dem hölzernen Daktylengeklapper die alte Anmuth weit entflohen ist, als die romantische. Die besten Poeten der Italiäner, ja der Spanier, nebst dem Shakespear, ja die altdeutschen Gedichte, welche sie haben können, und dann die Neueren, die am meisten in jenem romantischen Geiste gedichtet sind; das seyen die beständigen Begleiter eines jungen Mahlers, die ihn allmählig zurtückführen könnten in das alte romantische Land und den prosaischen Nebel antikischer Nachahmerei und ungesunden Kunstgeschwätzes von seinen Augen hinwegnehmen.³

Soon afterward, Friedrich's brother, August Wilhelm Schlegel, proved that he shared the same ideas. In his "Schreiben an Goethe über einige Arbeiten in Rom lebender Künstler,"⁴ in 1805, he discusses the works of the painter Schick, and praises his picture representing Noah's first sacrifice. He claims:

Ich kann nicht umhin, an diesem Beispiele die Vortrefflichkeit der biblischen und überhaupt der christlichen Gegenstände im Vorbeigehen zu berühren, die mir für die Malerei ebenso ewig und unerschöpflich scheinen, als die der klassischen Mythologie es für die Skulptur sind; ja in ihrer geheimnissvollen Heiligkeit noch unergründlicher.⁵

A little later he praises the painter Koch for imitating the older masters:

Ein besonderes Studium der älteren Meister, eines Fiesole, Masaccio, Pisani, Buffalmacco und Giotto, verbindet er mit dem des Michelangelo, welches für den Dante, denke ich, immer die rechte Verbindung sein wird.⁶

¹ *Europa*, Vol. II, 2, p. 143.

² *Ibid.*, p. 143.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 143 f.

⁴ First published in the *Intelligenzblatt der Jenaer Allgemeinen Literaturzeitung*, Nos. 120 and 121. I quote from *Werke*, hsg. von Böcking, Vol. IX (Leipzig, 1846), pp. 231 ff.

⁵ *Loc. cit.* p. 254.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

In 1817 he again expressed himself with undiminished enthusiasm in favor of early Italian art, in an essay entitled "Johann von Fiesole: Nachricht von seinem Leben, und Beschreibung seines Gemäldes Maria Krönung und die Wunder des heil. Dominikus."¹ He tries to define the position of the famous monk of S. Marco in the history of art. He describes his life, and, following Vasari and every writer on art since Vasari's day, lays stress on Angelico's piety. His genius, he tells us, is marked by "Süssigkeit, Zartheit und Anmuth," as contrasted with "der gefälligen und oberflächlichen Manier des Guido."² In the course of this essay he attacks Winckelmann's unfair condemnation of the harshness of Florentine art.³ Modern art, he concludes, fails from lack of religious inspiration; for

die Kunst als ein Widerschein des Göttlichen in der sichtbaren Welt, ist eine Angelegenheit und ein Bedürfniss der Menschheit, an welche, nach dem Ausdruck Dantes von seinem Gedicht:

—il poema sacro,

Al quale ha posto mano e cielo e terra—

Himmel und Erde Hand anlegen müssen, wenn sie gedeihen soll.⁴

As a consequence of the teachings of Wackenroder, and more especially of F. Schlegel, a group of German artists, under the leadership of Overbeck and Cornelius, settled in Rome for the purpose of putting into effect the new ideas. At first they lived in a monastery, St. Isidoro, and were known as "Die Klosterbrüder von St. Isidoro." This group dissolved in 1813, and after 1815 a new circle formed about Overbeck, generally known by their nickname "Die Nazarener." Wackenroder and the Schlegels had taught these young artists that simplicity and self-severity and a deep spiritual life, are necessary for the production of true art. Their attitude toward early Italian art was essen-

¹ *Werke*, loc. cit., Vol. IX, pp. 321 ff.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 352 f.

³ Cf. Winckelmann, *Geschichte der Kunst des Alterthums*, Vol. III, chap. 3, § 15. Even more severe are his strictures on Florentine art as expressed in the letter to Riedesel, dated Rome, March 18, 1763; cf. *Werke*, ed. Eiselein, Vol. IX, pp. 616 f.

⁴ *Loc. cit.*, p. 355. In the third part of *Geschichte der Romantischen Litteratur*, in the chapter "Ueber das Mittelalter" and further in "Der Bund der Kirche mit den Künsten"—a long poem in ottave rime written about 1800—Schlegel foresees a new art born of the religious spirit. Painting is to abandon the world of sense and deal with "geistliche Geshichten." Haym (*Romantische Schule*, p. 458) justly doubts the genuineness of the religious sentiment here exhibited.

tially that of Bury and of the other associates of Tischbein.¹ They recognized only the artists between Giotto and Raphael, and even Raphael's later manner, after he abandoned the teaching of Perugino, seemed to them an aberration. Giulio Romano was intolerable to them.² These views are singularly important for us, as they later controlled Rio, Ruskin's inspirer. The result of the labors, which occupied them many years, must seem to us moderns essentially unsatisfactory. In the history of art, however, they mark an admirable reaction against the shallow glamour of the eighteenth century.³ Their dependence on F. Schlegel becomes the clearer by the fact that one of their most prominent members was Schlegel's stepson, Philip Veit.

So, then, the new criticism seemed established, and even the protest of Goethe and Meyer against the union of art and religion apparently could not destroy the influence of the brilliant brothers. And, indeed, these two had greatly enriched the intellectual life of their generation; their very faults had proved fruitful of important results.

¹The connection between the Tischbein group and the Nazarener was, it seems, established by Eberhard Wächter, of whom, as we saw, Meyer, in his *Neu-deutsche religios-patriotische Kunst*, spoke as one of the Tischbein circle, and as one who among the first produced works in the spirit of the older masters. In 1806, before Overbeck came to Rome, Wächter met him in Vienna, and seems to have communicated to him the views and prejudices of the German painters in Rome (cf. Gurlitt, *loc. cit.*, p. 213).

²Cf. Gurlitt, *loc. cit.*, p. 215.

³Cf. Herman Riegel, *Geschichte des Wiederauflebens der deutschen Kunst zu Ende des 18. und Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts* (Hannover, 1876), pp. 319 ff.; also Gurlitt, *Die deutsche Kunst*, *loc. cit.*, pp. 58 ff., 212 ff., 233 ff.; moreover, Muther, *History of Modern Painting*, *loc. cit.*; also Howitt, *Friedrich Overbeck* (Freiburg i. B., 1886); also essays on Overbeck and Cornelius in *Allg. Dtsch. Biog.*

In 1817 Goethe and Meyer, frightened by the success of Schlegel's criticism and the works of the "Nazarener," published their essay, *Neu-deutsche, religios-patriotische Kunst*, from which we have already quoted several passages. It aimed a blow at the new ideas, but it showed beyond peradventure that neither Goethe nor his friend was capable of piercing the crude shell of the new principles and of understanding that Schlegel's message was vital for his time, and that Overbeck and Cornelius, with all their shortcomings, were establishing, in contrast to Mengs, a national art. It was, in fact, the example of this school which, forty years later, helped to free from the trammels of academic pedantry a group of young English artists who became known as "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood." The hyphen between German and English Pre-Raphaelitism was William Dyce, who had learned from Overbeck (cf. Gurlitt, *Die deutsche Kunst*, *loc. cit.*, p. 303; also *Dict. of Nat. Biog.* under Dyce). Howitt (*Overbeck*, Part II, p. 115) claims that Pugin, too, strongly recommended Overbeck as a model to English artists.

For interesting material on the lives of the Overbeck group in Rome, cf. *Briefe aus Italien von Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld, geschrieben in den Jahren 1817 bis 1827: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte seines Lebens und der Kunstbestrebungen seiner Zeit* (Gotha, 1886). For a French estimate of the "Nazarener" cf. H. Fortoul, *De l'art en Allemagne* (Paris, 1842), Vol. I, pp. 263 ff.

Yet it would have been far from fortunate for their country, had their ideas prevailed unmodified, and Germany must therefore be congratulated for having produced a scholar and critic who took from the teaching of the Schlegels all that was valuable, and left untouched all that was misleading and unsound. This remarkable man was Rumohr.¹ His *Italienische Forschungen*, based on the studies of many years, aimed to do for Christian art what Winckelmann's *Geschichte der Kunst des Altertums* had done for the art of antiquity. Vasari, Rumohr felt, was unreliable, because, being influenced by the technique of the Italian novelists of his day, he was entertaining, but lacked method. Even Lanzi, despite his great merit, was not sufficiently thorough. Besides, Rumohr, having become acquainted with the work of the Schlegels and of Overbeck, felt vastly more attracted by the earlier periods, and less by the seventeenth century, than did even Lanzi.

Rumohr's great work is characterized, considering the time in which it was written, by accuracy and care, his statements being always based on intimate study of the Italian archives. The notes reveal a large range of reading and the desire to reach the truth by an objective sifting of arguments.

In the theoretical part of the book, entitled "Zur Theorie und Geschichte neuerer Kunstbestrebungen: Haushalt der Kunst," he emphasizes the fact that Lessing and Winckelmann derived

¹ Karl Friedrich von Rumohr was born in 1785 in Reinhardtsgrμμα, near Dresden, and died in Dresden in 1843. While a student at Göttingen, he took lessons in drawing of Domenico Fiorillo, the author of the *Geschichte der zeichnenden Künste von ihrer Wieder-auftebung bis auf die neuesten Zeiten*. Fiorillo was a pupil of Batoni, and ranged against Mengs in the quarrel between the two. Rumohr at the death of his father inherited a large fortune, became a gentleman of leisure, and devoted himself to literature and art. Early in his life he turned Catholic, but this change of religion no more affected his inner life than a similar step had affected Winckelmann. He went to Italy several times. During a stay in Rome in 1816 he came in contact with the work of Overbeck and his associates, and thus deepened his interest in early Italian art. He published a large number of essays and studies on art and architecture. His greatest work is his *Italienische Forschungen* (Berlin and Stettin, 1827-31), in which several of these earlier publications were embodied. Besides works bearing on art or history, he put out historical novels, like *Der letzte Savello* (1834). More than that, being a great Sybarite in matters of food, he issued a cookbook, *Der Geist der Kochkunst* (1822). His large culture procured him the friendship of men like Friedrich Schlegel, Tieck, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Platen, and others. He was also highly esteemed by Louis I of Bavaria and Frederick William IV of Prussia. His eccentric temperament, however, was apt to estrange even great admirers. On Rumohr see his own *Drey Reisen nach Italien* (Leipzig, 1832); also H. W. Schulz, *Karl Friedrich von Rumohr, sein Leben und seine Schriften* (Leipzig, 1844); also Gurlitt, *Die deutsche Kunst*, pp. 157 ff.; also *Allg. Deutsch. Biog.*

their ideas from a knowledge merely of antiquity. He adds the sentence, significant for his whole method of work: "Denn nur, wer von einer beschränkenden Vorliebe für eigenthümliche Richtungen, Schulen und Förmlichkeiten der Kunst unabhängig ist, vermag das Wesen der Kunst rein aufzufassen." Rumohr's criticisms of the great exponents of antique art are, however, altogether free from that violence which affects us unpleasantly in Fr. Schlegel's comments on Winckelmann. For it is most important, Rumohr feels, that we learn to understand the true nature of art. As a contemporary of Tieck and Fr. Schlegel, he is inclined "die Kunst weit entschiedener, als jemals vor uns geschehen, recht in das innerste Heiligthum alles geistigen Wirkens und Lebens zu versetzen."

In the chapter entitled "Betrachtungen über den Ursprung der neueren Kunst" he expounds the value of the beginnings of Christian art. Though technically deficient, these earliest works are characterized by the "Macht einer neuen Begeisterung," which was to determine Christian art for all time to come. In the discussions which follow, Rumohr traces the influence of pagan on Christian art, and betrays a keen appreciation of evolution by proving how early suggestions flowered full-blown in the works of the greatest masters of later centuries. Even in these chapters Rumohr never teaches the theory that art becomes important and inspiring in proportion as it reflects devotion to Christian dogma, and loses value in proportion as such devotion ebbs from it. In the remaining chapters of this volume—"Ueber den Einfluss der gothischen und longobardischen Einwanderungen auf die Fortpflanzung römisch-altchristlicher Kunstfertigkeiten in der ganzen Ausdehnung Italiens," "Zustand der bildenden Künste von Karl des Grossen Regierung bis auf Friedrich I . . . ," "Zwölftes Jahrhundert: Regungen des Geistes, technische Fortschritte bey namhaften Künstlern," "Dreyzehntes Jahrhundert: Aufschwung des Geistes der italienischen Kunst; rascher Fortschritt in Vortheilen der Darstellung . . ."—the author describes the growth of various branches of art in Italy down to Cimabue. In no part of the whole work is one more impressed with Rumohr's infinite care and intellectual honesty than in these studies on

perhaps the most difficult periods of modern art. No wonder he constantly feels compelled to polemize against Vasari, and even against Lanzi and Fiorillo.

In the second volume the initial chapter treats of the earliest Sienese masters and Cimabue. In the next chapter, which is devoted to Giotto, Rumohr makes a great effort to disprove the validity of the general admiration for that artist. In the epitome of this discussion he comes to the conclusion that, though Giotto's merit was great, he helped to bring about "jene allmählich fortschreitende und immer zunehmende Entfremdung von den Ideen des christlichen Alterthumes" which marks the Florentine school, "etwa mit Ausnahme des Fiesole und des Masaccio." This chapter is perhaps the least satisfactory of the book. Here Rumohr loses his objectivity, and even lapses, as the sentence just quoted illustrates, into some of that phraseology about the inferiority of realistic to religious art which is generally so foreign to him. Next Rumohr adds a careful treatment of the disciples of Giotto.

Among the chapters which now follow, the one which we may call the core and kernel of the entire work, and which made the deepest impression on the contemporaries, is the one entitled "Entwurf einer Geschichte der umbrisch toscanischen Kunstschulen für das funfzehnte Jahrhundert." Here all those men of the early Renaissance are passed in review who through Ruskin have become the favorites of the English-speaking world. Again Rumohr at every turn goes beyond Vasari and Lanzi, and brings to light important new material. He was not the first to be attracted by these artists, as we have seen, but he became—to use the words of his biographer Schulz—"der wissenschaftliche Vertreter und Begründer der neuen Kunstansichten und Bestrebungen." The imitators of Giotto—such is Rumohr's thesis—had induced artists to treat the human side of religion, and had thus introduced so much "menschlich Wichtiges" that, on the whole, their innovations must be regarded as a "wesentliche Bereicherung." Yet these methods and theories did not arise from any desire "den Ideen des Christenthumes ihre ganze Tiefe, ihre ernstere Seite abzugewinnen." Masaccio and Fra Angelico represent two currents of the new art. Masaccio "übernahm die Erfor-

schung des Helldunkels, der Rundung und Auseinandersetzung zusammengeordneter Gestalten;" Fra Angelico "hingegen die Ergründung des inneren Zusammenhanges, der einwohnenden Bedeutung menschlicher Gesichtszüge, deren Fundgruben er zuerst der Malerey eröffnet." Then Rumohr enters with acumen into the individualities and the historical position of both artists. Masaccio's strength and virility, and his importance for art down to Lionardo, had never before been so well understood; at the same time, Fra Angelico's peculiar depth was never more sympathetically felt, not even by Schlegel. In his best works "erschöpfte sich dieser Künstler in den mannigfaltigsten Andeutungen einer mehr als irdischen Freudigkeit." Fra Angelico influenced Benozzo Gozzoli, for whom Rumohr has evident understanding.

The career of Cosimo Roselli and other minor painters proves that "nach allgemeinem Erlöschen der Begeisterung für die vorwaltenden Kunstaufgaben" only one way was left for the Florentine school to escape becoming mechanical, viz., "ein fröhliches (freylich nicht ein pedantisches) sich Hingeben in den Reiz natürlicher Erscheinungen." Fortunately, the city in which these artists lived was fine, the country lovely, the dress of men and women picturesque. Hence painters derived from the new method "den mannigfaltigsten Gewinn." This inroad of the realistic spirit was encouraged, he explains, by the influence of antiquity.

Filippo Lippi, whom Vasari without proof calls dissolute, was one of the "bedeutenderen Maler" of the Florentine group. His easel pictures are often "schwach, bisweilen derb und gemein;" but in his frescoes, where the subject called for action, "erwachte seine Seele." Botticelli and Filippino fare less well with our critic. He admires the history of Moses in the Sistine Chapel, but has little to say in praise of any other works of Botticelli which charm us today. Filippino is uneven; some of his paintings fairly disgust Rumohr. Ghirlandajo, on the other hand, attracts him. He greatly contributed to a better understanding of the human figure. Rumohr has great praise for many of Ghirlandajo's frescoes, especially those in the Santa Maria Novella in Florence, for their adequate interpretation "wirklichen Seyns." The thrift of Florence, Rumohr points out, helped realism in art.

When "Religiosität der Gesinnung" had left the Florentine church and a sectarian spirit had grown up (proved, among other things, by the career of Savonarola), "war es sicher nur ein Gewinn, dass bey den malerischen Unternehmungen jener Zeit eine neue Begeisterung (die bürgerliche) die eingetretene Lücke erfüllte." It is this "Begeisterung" which gives the Novella frescoes their peculiar value. To be sure, Ghirlandajo was too "derb" altogether to grasp the "Zartheit der neuchristlichen Idee der Madonna."

In Lionardo—always admired, but heretofore not sufficiently appreciated—we venerate "den Begründer eines bestimmteren anatomischen Wissens," who combines with this great technical knowledge a "reinere, ernstlicher gemeinte Auffassung der obwaltenden kirchlichen Kunstaufgaben."

The school of Perugia, which perhaps affected Lionardo through Perugino, always had the advantage of other schools in possessing an irresistible "geheime Reiz" derived from a wonderful blending of "halbdeutliche Reminiscenzen" of the oldest Christian art with the "mildere Vorstellungen" of younger schools. Perugino became famous largely on account of his influence on Raphael. His own merit has so far generally been underrated. In his later years, he, like many others, became mechanical, "vom Handwerke hingerissen;" but in his best work—the frescoes in Santa Maria Maddalena de' Pazzi—he combines severe study with a "damals ganz ungewöhnliche Klarheit der Anschauung seines ideellen Gegenstandes." A certain sameness runs through all he painted—the result not so much of his "Manier" as of his subjects and his "Gemüthsstimmung."

Raphael, the "vollendete Meister" of the art of painting, owes his "keusche Sinn," his respect for tradition, his religious feeling, probably mostly to Perugino; his "feine Natursinn" he derived from Florentine influence.

In the last chapter of this volume, entitled "Die unumgängliche Vielseitigkeit in den Beziehungen, die Hindernisse der Entwicklung, die Ursachen des vorzeitigen Verfalles," Rumohr first introduces a sympathetic discussion of Sodoma, maligned, he claims, by Vasari. Then follows a very interesting treatise on the effect of

antiquity on Italian art from early times. He shows how the widening of the province of art, caused by the influence of antiquity, came about from the "Steigerung eines Verlangens" which gleams even in the works of the Middle Ages, and asserts itself clear and strong in the fifteenth century. The antique world furnished Raphael with a mass of heterogeneous material, such as myth, fable, allegory, etc., which he used with great liberty and interpreted with the *verve* of Apulejus and Ovid; correctly feeling that it should not be treated with severity and in the spirit of religion, but in worldly and poetical fashion. It is only within recent times that the theory has arisen that such treatment is idle and inartistic. This last remark is leveled, of course, against the Schlegel-Overbeck school of criticism. Rumohr is evidently more nearly in harmony with Meyer and Goethe than would appear from his bitter polemics against them.

The ancients, Rumohr continues, correctly felt that the appearance of things about us have a "sinnliche Reiz an und für sich," apart from any "Bedeutung." Among moderns the Dutch were the most successful in giving us this "Schwelgerey des Auges." To furnish such delight is perfectly legitimate. For it is an artist's duty to satisfy any honest demand of his time.

The premature decay of Italian art Rumohr explains by the exaggerated "Zunftgeist;" also by the tendency in the sixteenth century to hire artists to furnish work in the shortest possible time. These theories, however insufficient they may appear to modern students of culture-history, are noteworthy as marking Rumohr's freedom from the principle so dear to Wackenroder and Schlegel: the dependence of art on religion.

The third volume deals mostly with Raphael. It rather disappointed the public. Yet Herman Grimm in his treatise on Raphael claims that Rumohr's chapters on Raphael contained material of the first importance.

Of particular interest to us, however, is the fact that Rumohr nowhere condemns any of Raphael's later works on the ground of worldliness, as had done Tischbein and all his followers, and that even the "Transfiguration" meets with his unstinted praise.

The Bolognese masters, whose good points Rumohr seems to

recognize—he speaks of them as “*technisch höchst gewandte Männer*”—evidently do not satisfy him. He mentions them only casually, and in one place blames them for not understanding that eclecticism such as they aimed at was absurd.

The volume closes with interesting chapters on the evolution of Christian architecture, and a short essay on “*Arabische Baukunst*.”

We miss most in Rumohr’s book any study of the Venetian school. His principle was, however, to treat exclusively of those works which he knew from intimate personal observation; hence his omission, too, of artists like Francia.

We have transcribed merely what seemed to us most characteristic in Rumohr’s volumes—we omitted even his comments on the great Italian sculptors—but what has been given may suffice to enable the reader to appreciate the nature of Rumohr’s contribution. He was the first to devote critical study to the earliest periods and, what is more important, to the artists of the fifteenth century; thus laying the scientific foundation for the modern criticism of Italian art, and utterly destroying the influence of Cochin and Mengs. Like Tischbein, Wackenroder, and Schlegel, he was deeply interested in the simplicity and naïveté of the religious painters. Yet the criticism, which Goethe and Meyer best represented, against the vagaries of Schlegel and Overbeck acted on him as an admirable corrective.¹

Rumohr, today almost forgotten, attracted wide attention during his lifetime, and affected not merely his own countrymen, but even foreigners. The person who was to profit from the *Italienische Forschungen* beyond anyone else was not a German, but one of those Frenchmen—and every generation has produced them—for whom German civilization has strong fascination—A.-F. Rio.²

¹The next scholar of importance to carry on Rumohr’s work was Franz Kugler. In his *Handbuch der Geschichte der Malerei von Constantin dem Grossen bis auf die neuere Zeit* (Berlin, 1837) we find the evolution of painting described in its entirety. In 1842 followed his *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, which became basic for all modern works in the field of art-history.

²Alexis-François Rio was born in Normandy in 1798 and died in 1874. From his earliest childhood he showed a strong religious bent. This instinct in him was fed by the reaction against the contempt for religion preached by the French Revolution and implied by

To Rio, as to many men and women of his time, Catholic doctrine was not merely sacred and final, but the carrier of superhuman bliss and serenity. He was, moreover, one of those souls on fire who, in protest against the rationalism of the eighteenth century, were making inevitable in every part of Europe the creation of a new art and a new philosophy. No wonder, then, that early in life he felt dissatisfied with the eighteenth-century interpretation of Italian art. In France the æsthetic tradition represented by Cochin was still potent, he tells us, in his youth. Admiration for the Carracci—which, we saw, Stendall himself could not shake off—was “une sorte de maladie” among Frenchmen.¹ For even the distinguished author of the *Génie du Christianisme* in Rome and in Bologna adored the works of the Carracci and, more curious still, in Rome despised the æsthetic standards of Overbeck and his disciples;² he regarded merely as “blasphèmes” their estimate of

Napoleon's treatment of the Pope—the reaction so brilliantly voiced by Chateaubriand. During the “Cent Jours” he fought “pour Dieu et pour le Roi.” For a time he taught, then occupied a government position. After his marriage he seems to have devoted himself to his studies. He made many trips to Germany—those of 1831, 1832, and 1833 proving the most fruitful. Here he came under the influence of Schelling, and especially of the philosopher Baader. The former impressed him particularly by his doctrine of the importance of the artist as a cultural and spiritualizing force. Even stronger was the influence upon him of Baader's views, deeply tinged as they were with mysticism. Rio's veneration for orthodox Catholicism grew more and more profound with time, and even led to a rupture with his friend, the famous Lamennais. In Munich Döllinger called his attention to Rumohr's *Italianische Forschungen*, which had just appeared. The book gave direction to his groping, but intense interest in Christian art. German thought further influenced him through the writings of men like Hamann, Jean Paul, and others, who intensified his temperamental dislike for the rationalistic *Weltanschauung*. In Italy, which he visited several times, he became acquainted in 1832 with several representatives of the German school of painting who, years before, had fanned Rumohr's interest in the older masters. In 1833 he met Sulpiz Boisserée in Coblenz and Ph. Veit in Frankfort on the Main; in 1842 he made the acquaintance of Cornelius in Berlin. In 1836 came out the first volume of the work in which he aimed to give to the world a new interpretation of Italian art. He gave it the infelicitous title: *De la poésie chrétienne dans son principe, dans sa matière et dans ses formes. Forme de l'art. Peinture* (Paris, 1836). It was to appear in two volumes, but the ill success of the first volume for a time discouraged him. From 1836 on he frequently visited England. At last he published the second volume in 1851, with the title *De l'art chrétien* (Paris). Among his other publications should be named: *Essai sur l'histoire de l'esprit humain dans l'antiquité* (1828-30); *Léonard di Vinci et son école* (1855); *Quatre martyrs* (1856); *Shakspeare* (1864)—an attempt at proving the Catholicism of Shakespeare. The second and greatly changed edition of his work on Italian painting appeared from 1861 to 1867, under the title: *De l'art chrétien. Nouvelle édition, entièrement refondue et considérablement augmentée*. The chief source of information on Rio's life is his autobiography, *Epilogue à l'art chrétien* (Fribourg-en-Brisgau, 1870). The biographical dictionaries give but scant and partly incorrect information.

¹ *Epilogue à l'art chrétien*, Vol. I, p. 337.

² He speaks of this group of artists in Part III, Book XII, of his *Mémoires d'Outre Tombe* (cf. ed. by Edmond Bire [Paris, no date], Vol. V, pp. 31 f.).

Perugino and their preference for the first manner of Raphael over the second. He, "qui avait presque entrevu les conditions de l'esthétique chrétienne," could not understand that these German painters under his very eyes "accomplissaient instinctivement une œuvre analogue à la sienne."¹

When Rio went to Italy for the first time in 1830, French travelers were never taken to the chapel of Nicholas V in the Vatican—containing the frescoes by Fra Angelico which, as we saw, were discovered by Hirt for German criticism as early as about 1790—and in the Sistine Chapel never had their attention called to the frescoes by Fra Angelico, Botticelli, and Ghirlandajo. The "Disputa" and the "School of Athens" were regarded merely "comme des acheminements à de plus grandes choses, et les transports d'enthousiasme ne commençaient que quand on rencontrait la collaboration néfaste de Jules Romain."²

Though burdened with this tradition, Rio even on this first visit to Rome instinctively made himself independent by studying the catacombs and certain early Madonnas. He now decided to go to Munich. On his way there he visited Venice—this "république héroïquement chrétienne"—which made an indelible impression on him. Now it was that in Munich he read for the first time the *Italienische Forschungen*³—a book which he says started "une ère nouvelle dans cette branche de littérature qui forme la base et l'aliment de la science esthétique."⁴ Italian art suddenly appeared to him in a new light. He read everything he could to further a plan, as yet vague, of bringing about in France a revolution in the interpretation of Christian art.⁵ "Je puis dire," he declares in another place,⁶ "que Rumohr fut mon véritable initiateur, et qu'à lui seul revient le mérite de ce qu'il peut y [in Rio's book] avoir d'original dans certaines appréciations qui, sans lui avoir été directement empruntées, me furent ou inspirées ou facilitées par ses ouvrages," Rumohr, whom Rio praises as "à la fois archéologue, poète, helléniste, graveur, peintre, musicien,"⁷ omitted to do for Venetian what he so successfully

¹ *Epil.*, Vol. I, pp. 337, 338.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 336.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 121.

² *Ibid.*, p. 339.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 367.

performed for Florentine art. It became Rio's aim among other things to fill this gap.¹

In 1831 he was back in Venice to finish those studies which had suggested themselves to him in Munich. In order to understand the art of Venice as the expression of national character, he plunged into a study of the Venetian chronicles, archives, and legends, until the individuality of the city and its people became familiar to him as they probably had never been to anyone before. His main difficulty here, and in other parts of Italy where he studied now and later, was the indifference of the persons he met toward his ideas. For he had elective affinity only with the older painters and could not understand even Titian.

After all we have heard, we may hazard the belief—even before turning to the book itself—that Rio's interpretation of Italian art must be based in large part on material furnished by Rumohr, and is likely to agree in striking fashion with the Tischbein-Wackenroder-Schlegel-Overbeck point of view. This premonition finds corroboration in a study of the facts.

At the very outset Rio declares his hostility to traditional attitude in matters of art. "Ce qu'on est convenu d'appeler un chef-d'œuvre"² cannot appeal to him. On the other hand, in the earliest attempts of Christian artists, as found in the catacombs, "au sein des inspirations les plus grandes qui furent jamais,"³ he discovers the records of a "pensée naïve, attendrissante ou héroïque."⁴ This early art, so much despised by the "connaisseurs," deeply thrills him. After passing in review the age of Constantine, the effect of the Germanic invasions, the age of Charlemain, and the influence of Byzantine art, he turns to the school of Siena. Vasari hardly deigns to mention it, Rio informs us with contempt, but he, Rio, takes great delight in some of the work of men like Duccio and Simone Memmi.⁵

The Madonna by Cimabue in Sta. Maria Novella is conspicuous for "le charme tout à fait nouveau du coloris" and "la dignité imposante."⁶ Giotto he rates much higher than Rumohr had done and praises particularly the originality of the "Coronation of the

¹ *Epil.*, Vol. I, p. 123.

³ P. 3.

⁵ Pp. 46 ff.

² *Poésie chrétienne*, p. 2.

⁴ P. 5.

⁶ P. 61.

Virgin" in Sta. Croce. He bestows similar praise on the followers of Giotto, notably on Orcagna, "le Michel-Ange de son siècle."¹

During this first period, Florentine art made steady progress. In the second we miss unity and find less purity. Through the revival of interest in pagan civilizations an element of decadence almost imperceptibly grows and corrupts painters, sculptors, and poets. Ucello marks this decay: he signifies an advance in matters of technique, but he lacks inspiration.² Dangerous tendencies in the direction of naturalism now arise, such as the habit of introducing the portraits of donors in sacred pictures. Three schools now appear in Florence. One continued the old traditions left by the disciples of Giotto, another was influenced by the technique of the jeweler's trade, and the third took its models from among persons who lived and died in monasteries in the odor of sanctity.³

Among the prominent artists of this period, Masaccio deserves praise for deriving valuable elements from antiquity. So much Rio grants, yet he evidently believes that the growing realistic tendency of Florentine art, best exhibited by Masaccio's work, marks no real advance.⁴ Filippo Lippi's type of Madonnas and saints is intolerably vulgar. In his works "l'oubli du but auquel l'art chrétien doit tendre est porté si loin, qu' il est impossible de lui pardonner ses profanations."⁵ He was a libertine. Hence he could not rise "à la hauteur de ces peintres religieux, qui, dans le siècle précédent, avaient donné à l'art une si grande destination."⁶ Lippi's inferiority shows particularly in his angels: "nul rayon de béatitude céleste n'illumine leurs visages."⁷ He helped the Florentine school by improving the best elements of naturalism, yet he put there "un germe de décadence."⁸ Botticelli was influenced by Lippi. He even adopted Lippi's "types vulgaires." His Madonnas, however, are better and "ont presque toujours le visage voilé par la tristesse."⁹ In his estimate of Ghirlandajo, Rio becomes inconsistent. He praises his "fécondité et maturité,"¹⁰ and because of their grandeur is willing to condone the realism of the Novella frescoes.

¹ P. 81.⁴ Pp. 108 ff.⁷ P. 117.⁹ P. 128.² Pp. 90 ff.⁵ P. 115.⁸ P. 118.¹⁰ P. 130.³ Pp. 90 ff.⁶ P. 116.

During the fifteenth century, then, Florentine art made great progress, but through the influx of paganism, which emanated as a bad influence from the court of the Medici, painting ceased for many artists to be "une des formes de la poésie chrétienne."¹ Only one school in this period offers a "spectacle consolant" by being "supérieure à toutes les autres par le caractère éminemment mystique de ses produits, et par l'inaltérable pureté de ses inspirations."² Rio continues: "Ici s'arrête la compétence de ce qu'on appelle vulgairement *les connaisseurs*."³ For mysticism is to painting "ce que l'extase est à la psychologie, ce qui dit assez combien sont délicats les matériaux qu'il s'agit de mettre en œuvre dans cette partie de notre histoire."⁴ Rio now subjoins a long discussion of mediæval mysticism and points out its profound influence on former generations. Nowhere does he betray greater glow of conviction and depth of feeling than in dealing with this subject, so foreign to most of his contemporaries.

Fra Angelico, who had "mûri et sanctifié son talent dans le silence du cloître,"⁵ ignorant of the great revolution beginning in his day in Florentine art, became the finest exponent of this school, "à la fois si mystique et si lyrique."⁶ He has certain defects in the treatment of the body, but to notice them one would have to be "bien inaccessible à tout ce que l'art chrétien peut faire naître d'émotions plus délicieuses dans une âme convenablement préparée."⁷ They arise, not from inability, but from indifference to everything foreign "au but transcendental qui occupait sa pieuse imagination."⁸ A close examination of certain paintings which at first may seem tiresome reveals "une variété prodigieuse qui embrasse tous les degrés de poésie que peut exprimer la physiognomie humaine."⁹ Rio then interprets with warmth several of Angelico's works, among them the frescoes in the chapel of St. Nicholas in the Vatican.

Fra Angelico's favorite pupil was Benozzo Gozzoli. Rio speaks of several of his paintings with praise and puts the frescoes in the Campo Santo in Pisa among the "plus étonnantes merveilles

¹ P. 158.⁴ P. 160.⁷ P. 192.² P. 159.⁵ P. 173.⁸ P. 192.³ P. 160.⁶ P. 190.⁹ P. 193.

de l'art." "Il fallait pour y réussir un mélange de grandeur et de naïveté où l'école naturaliste de Florence ne pouvait déjà plus atteindre." Benozzo was the best representative of the "style patriarchal"—the most difficult of all.¹

Among those who painted in a similar spirit the most important are Gentile da Fabriano, and especially Perugino. For the latter our critic has a great predilection and places him higher than even Rumohr was willing to do. When Perugino came to Florence, he was still free from "toutes les profanations contemporaines,"² for he had painted only religious subjects. His best period was about 1500. What he did after that is senile. The frescoes in Sta. Maria Maddalena in Florence are among his best. From his school sprang he who may fairly be called "le prince de l'art chrétien, du moins pendant la plus belle partie de sa vie."³ The school of Perugia dealt with fewer subjects than did others, and omitted the study of the antique. Hence Perugino was accused of sterility of imagination by his contemporaries, who did not understand that an artist "qui cherche ses inspirations en dehors de la sphère des objects sensibles" will strive beyond all things to develop types which "se sont imposés comme une tâche longue et religieuse à son pinceau." "La gloire de l'école ombrienne est d'avoir poursuivi sans relâche ce but transcendantal de l'art chrétien."⁴ The inspiring influence of Perugino and his group spread to Bologna and affected artists like Francia. Pinturicchio may or may not have been a disciple of Perugino; he certainly painted in much the same spirit (e. g., in the frescoes of Sta. Maria del Popolo in Rome). In the Appartamenti Borgia in Rome he was humiliated by being compelled to introduce the portraits of Alexander VI and his relatives in sacred pictures. It gives one satisfaction to see the inferiority of this "œuvre purement mercenaire."⁵ Luca Signorelli must have been influenced by Perugino in his beautiful frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. In other works he shows no "influences d'inspirations également heureuses."⁶ He wished to become popular and to rival contemporary artists. Hence he began to study the nude, and even

¹ Pp. 203 f.³ P. 234.⁵ P. 265.² P. 220.⁴ Pp. 235 f.⁶ P. 273.

"rechercha les bonnes grâces de Laurent de Médici."¹ Now his style gained in force what it lost in purity. Hence the general admiration for his "Last Judgment" in Orvieto. With all its good points this painting "ne prouve qu'un progrès purement externe dans Luca Signorelli."² He had so exclusively devoted himself to the study of anatomy that he "avait fini par ne plus voir autre chose dans l'art et même dans l'homme."³

We now come to him "qui fait à la fois le couronnement et la clôture de l'école ombrienne, et qui a eu la gloire de porter l'art chrétien à son plus haut point de perfection,"⁴ viz., Raphael. When Raphael first went to Florence, "le naturalisme était encore dans tout l'orgueil du triomphe obtenu sur Savonarole et ses partisans,"⁵ but Raphael chose his associates—men like Ridolfo Ghirlandajo and Fra Bartolomeo—"dans le parti vaincu."⁶ As Raphael went several times to Perugia between 1505 and 1508, he had opportunity to continue his early method. Rio then adds an appreciation of the Madonnas of the early period. The "Vierge au baldaquin" is the most beautiful: it is the triumph of Christian art. Later on, changes almost imperceptibly came over Raphael. Yet, "le paganisme, de plus en plus en vogue parmi les graveurs et les artistes florentins, n'arriva pas jusqu'à lui et ne souilla pas une seule fois la pureté de son pinceau." "Cette noble répugnance pour tout ce qui tendait à dégrader l'art chrétien"⁷ explains why Raphael found few illustrious protectors.

Among the tasks put before Raphael when he was called to paint the walls of the "Camera della Segnatura" was one subject which may be regarded as "une bonne fortune sans pareille" to a painter trained in the atmosphere of the Umbrian school—the "Disputa." The painting which treats this subject is therefore a masterpiece "sans rivale dans l'histoire de la peinture." Soon after finishing this wonder of art, Raphael showed symptoms of decay.⁸ Hence the admirers of his first style look upon his second "avec une sorte de répugnance ou au moins avec froideur." Rio feels compelled to polemicize against Rumohr's explanation of this revolution in the great painter.⁹

¹ P. 273.³ P. 274.⁵ Pp. 277 f.⁷ Pp. 291 f.⁹ Pp. 298 ff.² P. 274.⁴ Pp. 274 f.⁶ P. 278.⁸ P. 294.

Now Rio introduces a long chapter on Savonarola. As lovers "de l'art et de la poésie chrétienne" we must remember, in order to understand the famous monk, that he found everything in Florence—art, manners, customs—polluted with paganism.¹ He saw that "la décadence des beaux-arts tenait principalement à la décadence du culte parmi les chrétiens."² His influence became tremendous, and the enthusiasm for his doctrines went so far that many voluptuous works of art, among them several antique statues, were destroyed. "Fra Bartolomeo apportait scrupuleusement tous les desseins qu'il avait faits comme études du nu, et son exemple fut suivi par Lorenzo di Credi et par plusieurs autres peintres qui avaient compris le besoin d'une prompte régénération pour leur art."³

The following chapter deals with the men who, according to Rio, in their art carried out Savonarola's teaching, especially Lorenzo di Credi, Fra Bartolomeo, and Ridolfo Ghirlandajo. He calls this "l'école religieuse pure."⁴ Fra Bartolomeo is a great favorite of Rio, who delights in his "répugnance pour toute espèce de sujets profanes."⁵ Ridolfo left the path of his father and became "le dernier représentant de l'école mystique."⁶

Many interesting works of the sixteenth century belong to "naturalisme." Though we find in them "conceptions beaucoup moins sublimes" than are those of the Umbrian school, they nevertheless stand in the front rank in the history of painting "quand on est venu à la période de décroissance."⁷ Rio cannot by any means place as high an estimate as does Cochin in his *Voyage d'Italie* on the artists who imitate nature on the side of color. Yet "nous leur devons une sorte de reconnaissance pour avoir donné à cet élément subalterne tout le développement dont il était susceptible."⁸ To the glory of the artists of Florence be it said that even in the period of decadence "ils ne se sont pas laissés séduire par la vogue scandaleuse"—in matters of coloring—"qu'obtenaient les productions cyniques du Titien et de Jules Romain."⁹

¹ P. 305.⁴ P. 364.⁷ P. 396.² P. 323.⁵ P. 371.⁸ P. 396.³ P. 352.⁶ P. 395.⁹ P. 397.

Andrea del Sarto had much talent, but lacked the highest inspiration. His disgraceful passion for Lucrezia del Fede made him put her into several of his paintings as the Virgin. Some of his Madonnas, like the one in the Annunziata in Florence, the Madonna del Sacco, and the Madonna of St. Francis in the Tribuna, are admirable; others belong to a "type vulgaire."¹

Mantegna absorbed much from antiquity with wonderful powers of assimilation. Such skill makes one "*regretter d'autant plus la perte d'un temps si précieux qu'il aurait pu consacrer exclusivement à la composition d'œuvres plus vitales.*"² Later—much to his advantage—he was somewhat influenced by Giovanni Bellini. The Madonna in S. Zeno in Verona, however, calls out Rio's enthusiastic approval. Mantegna had no great disciples—not even his two sons accomplished anything important. "*Ce triste résultat prouve plus invinciblement qu'aucune théorie, la funeste influence exercée par l'élément païen sur les arts d'imagination, toutes les fois qu'il n'a pas été rigoureusement subordonné à l'élément religieux, le seul qui contienne le germe de traditions véritablement vivaces.*"³ Mantua, "cette pauvre ville," was haunted by a sort of fatality. No sooner did the "*école défectueuse*" of Mantegna expire there than she hailed with delight "*le cynique Jules Romain*" whose brush, void of poetry, "*était toujours incomparable quand il s'agissait de distiller le poison.*"⁴

Venice did not go to Mantua nor to Padua—where at one time Lippi found favor—for inspiration. She preferred to communicate with the "*école pure et mystique*" of Umbria.⁵ The influence of Umbrian ideals continued in Venice until came "*la grande invasion du naturalisme et du paganisme*" at the end of the fifteenth century. Gentile da Fabriano established the connection between Venice and Umbria. He was in a sense the founder of the school of the Bellinis. German and Dutch art also influenced painting in Venice.⁶

Of the two Bellinis, Gentile had a leaning toward the principles of the school of Mantegna. Giovanni never did. He painted much better later in life than he had done earlier in his career.

¹ Pp. 406 ff.³ P. 454.⁵ P. 457.² P. 446.⁴ P. 455.⁶ Pp. 457 ff.

But his type of Christ was always the same. He never spoiled his works by making them merely graceful. The Virgin on his canvasses is always "toute entière au pressentiment de ses souffrances." This type of Madonna is not as beautiful as that of the Umbrian school, "mais il est plus prophétique."¹ After Antonello da Messina had taught him the art of painting in oil, he began to produce his greatest *chefs-d'œuvre*. Among these the Madonna in the Frari church in Venice is a masterpiece comparable to the greatest of the Umbrian school. The artist seems to have had an "avant-goût de la béatitude céleste"² when he painted it. The Madonna in S. Zaccaria in Venice is the "chef-d'œuvre de l'école vénitienne pour tout ce qui tient à la poésie et à la profondeur des caractères." We find in it "grace naïve" and "simplicité touchante"—the "attribus exclusifs des productions de cette époque, qui fut comme l'âge d'or de la peinture chrétienne."³

Among the other masters of the older period of Venetian art, Carpaccio is to him the most delightful. The Ursula series he calls "ce monument colossal de l'art chrétien."⁴

Among Giovanni Bellini's pupils occurred a schism. Some "s'engagèrent dans les voies du perfectionnement extérieur, à la suite du Giorgion, réformateur non moins impétueux ni moins hardi que son contemporain Luther." Others continued the principles of mystic art. They were "amplement dédomagés par le suffrage populaire de la pitié qu'ils inspiraient aux novateurs" (!).⁵ Among those faithful to these sacred tenets, Vincenzo Catena was "l'un des plus grands peintres de l'école vénitienne."⁶

Giovanni Bellini influenced artists in different parts of the Veneto, especially in Bergamo; these pure traditions in the little town explain the appearance of Palma Vecchio and Lorenzo Lotto.⁷

On the remaining pages of his book Rio speaks of the relation of painting to music, has praise for Paolo Veronese's "magnifique tableau des noces de Cana"⁸ in the Louvre, shows how much longer the Venetian school retained religious feeling in painting

¹ P. 474.² P. 478.³ P. 481.⁴ P. 498.⁵ P. 504.

⁶ P. 506. Catena is now forgotten. Never does the danger of the Schlegel-Rio method become more apparent than by such praise bestowed on mediocrity.

⁷ P. 517.⁸ P. 524.

than did other schools; furthermore, how intense the Christian spirit was in Venetian life, and how corruption ultimately overwhelmed Venice in the eighteenth century.¹

Was ever interpretation more subjective, capricious, one-sided, placed upon the works of the great artists of Italy? Not only does Rio neglect or despise nearly everything which to Cochin and Mengs seemed vital, but he goes so far in his reaction against the rationalism of the eighteenth century that he might fairly, by way of motto, have placed on the fly-leaf of his book the words of Friedrich Schlegel, quoted above: "Ich habe vorzüglich Sinn für den alten Styl in der christlichen Mahlerei, nur diese verstehe und begreife ich, und nur über diese kann ich reden." For with Rio, as with Schlegel, the supreme test of a work of art is: "Does it breathe the religious spirit?" not at all: "Is it well painted?" or, "Does it reflect a great artistic individuality?" That ill-starred confusion between art and religion, implied as early as 1790 in the principles of Tischbein's associates, which appeared for the first time in a printed work in Wackenroder's *Herzensergiessungen*, which gives to Fr. Schlegel's essays their glamor of originality, and which guided the brush of the artists grouped about Overbeck—informs every line of the *Poésie chrétienne*. What Wackenroder had preached with subdued sweetness here sounds in clarion notes. The *Poésie chrétienne* may be called the great manifesto of the Wackenroder-Schlegel school of criticism."²

¹ When the second volume appeared in 1855, Lindsay and Ruskin had begun to publish. It therefore does not interest us here, although it represents the same point of view as the first.

² That Rio was directly influenced by the writings of Fr. Schlegel is proved by a passage in the *Poésie* (p. 450) in which he quotes from the essay in the *Europa*, entitled "Gemäldebeschreibungen aus Paris und den Niederlanden," and calls Schlegel "l'homme qui a le plus vivement senti l'art chrétien dans les temps modernes et qui portait dans ses jugemens esthétiques toute la candeur d'une belle âme jointe aux lumières d'un beau génie." The title of Rio's work, apparently so far-fetched, seems inspired by a passage in Schlegel's *Europa* (Vol. II, erstes Stück, pp. 113 ff.). Schlegel here discusses the two elements which are essential to good painting: technique and inspiration, "Geist und Buchstabe, Erfindung und Ausführung." Of the latter he says: "Auch ist die Erfindung so zu verstehen, dass, was man Anordnung und Composition nennt, mit darunter verstanden ist; mit einem Worte, die Poesie in dem Gemählde . . . Geist und Buchstabe also, das Mechanische und die Poesie, das sind Bestandtheile der Mahlerei . . . Einer möglichen Misdeutung müssen wir noch vorbeugen, was die Forderung der Poesie betrifft. Der Mahler soll ein Dichter seyn, das ist keine Frage; aber nicht eben ein Dichter in Worten, sondern in Farben. Mag er doch seine Poesie überall anders herhaben, als aus der Poesie selbst, wenn es nur Poesie ist. Das Beispiel der alten Mahler wird uns auch hier am besten orientiren. . . . Aber wir

It is interesting to note the difference between Rio and Rumohr, the scholar to whom he avowedly owed so much. No one could be more deeply interested in the naïve religious painters of Italy than the great German critic. But Rumohr, checked by a thoroughly artistic temperament, never forgets that pictorially to interpret life in its multitudinous forms is as great a contribution to the spiritual development of the race as exclusively to study the manifestations of the religious spirit; is, in fact, in a broad sense, a form of worship. More than that, he never overlooks the tremendous importance of technique, and he is fully aware that to be a religious painter need by no means necessarily imply being a great artist.

But let us not be unjust. Rio, like Schlegel, is certainly not conspicuous for soundness. Yet, as Schlegel, by dint of those very exaggerations which offend us, freed Germany from Mengs, so Rio, by his profound love for the poetry of religion, freed France from the worldly and unsatisfactory critical dogma of Cochin. The Frenchman did even more than the German toward establishing in the eyes of the world the importance of those early masters who had so long been condemned, and who are so dear to us now. He did more, I say; for his book was destined to make a deep impression in various parts of Europe.

In France, to be sure, it was at first entirely unsuccessful. The publisher sold only twelve copies during the first five months after its appearance, and as late as 1838 Délacluse, the oracle in matters of art on the *Journal des Débats*, asked Rio's friend Montalembert whether Rio actually was in earnest with his peculiar views on painting. He even wrote articles which were meant to warn young artists against those ideas. A sort of despair fell

meinen darunter nur die poetische Ansicht der Dinge, und diese hatten die Alten näher aus der Quelle. Die Poesie der alten Mahler war theils die Religion, wie beim Perugino, Fra Bartholomeo und vielen andern Alten; theils Philosophie, wie beim tiefsinnigen Leonardo, oder aber beides, wie in dem unergründlichen Dürer." He continues to explain that the poetry of the Middle Ages was religion and mystic philosophy. Therefore in our scientific age, in which religion has virtually passed out of life, the painter's only recourse is "die universellste Kunst aller Künste . . . die Poesie, wo er, wenn er sie gründlich studirt, beides vereinigt finden wird, sowohl die Religion als die Philosophie der alten Zeit. Dass nun eine *solche poetische Absicht* in den Gemälden der alten, sowohl italienischen als deutschen Schule durchaus vorhanden, ja der eigentliche Zweck der Malerei sey, das liesse sich durch vollständige Induktion beweisen." (*Loc. cit.*, p. 114.) Rio's whole work appears like an attempt to furnish this *Induktion*.

on Rio.¹ Only in later years did the book become more influential in its own country.

In England, on the contrary, Rio was soon to make a profound impression. He had married an English woman, and from 1836 on he repeatedly visited Great Britain and there became acquainted with many prominent men, like Lord Stanhope, Lord Houghton, Carlyle, Gladstone, Manning, Wordsworth, and especially Samuel Rogers. Gladstone became deeply interested in the *Poésie chrétienne*, and took it with him on a trip to Italy in 1838.² The disciples of the new art-criticism after a time became so numerous in England that during the "season" of 1840 Rio's position was much like that of the chief of a sect.³

There was good reason why Rio at precisely this time should make so profound an impression in England, when his own country refused to understand him. For several years before his arrival the English cultured had been stirred by a religious upheaval which in intensity far surpassed any other that had ever reached this class. The Oxford Movement had been started by Keble in 1833. Pusey, enthusiastic and learned, had greatly added to its strength. In 1836 John Henry Newman began his investigations of Catholicism (cf. his *Romanism and Popular Protestantism*) which, starting in a spirit of hostility to Rome, were later to end in espousal of the Catholic *Weltanschauung*. In February, 1841, about the time when Rio was impressing London circles, appeared Newman's famous *Tract No. 90*, in which he tried to refute the allegation that the Thirty-nine Articles were irreconcilable with

¹*Epilogue*, Vol. II, pp. 274, 275, 399, 400.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 325-60.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 406 ff. In 1854 there appeared in London a translation of the *Poésie*, entitled: *The Poetry of Christian Art, Translated from the French of A. F. Rio* (cf. *Epilogue*, Vol. II, pp. 412 ff.). Among those who helped to spread Rio's doctrines one of the most enthusiastic was Mrs. Jameson (*Epil.*, loc. cit., p. 412). In 1841 she met Rio in Paris. She calls this meeting "the great event of my life here" (cf. *Memoirs of the Life of Anna Jameson*, by her Niece Gerardine Macpherson [Boston, 1878], p. 176), and further mentions visiting the Louvre in his company. Mrs. Jameson's books, written before this meeting (e. g., *The Diary of an Ennuyée*, 1826; *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad*, 1834), betray no interest in the early artists. In 1841 she began to devote her life to the interpretation of sacred art. The most important product of her new studies is her *Memoirs of the Early Italian Painters* (1845) and especially her *Sacred and Legendary Art* (1848 ff.). About this time the *Poésie* was taken up with enthusiasm even in Italy. Manzoni and Cesare Cantù admired it, and, Rio states, an Italian translation with notes by Rumohr appeared (I know nothing more of this translation). (Cf. *Epilogue*, Vol. II, pp. 400, 419, 423.) Germany, the country of Rumohr, was naturally less impressed with the *Poésie*. Yet Cornelius read it and gave it to Frederick William IV (*ibid.*, p. 416).

Roman Catholic teaching. Sinister significance was given to this publication by the fact that a strong current was beginning to set toward Rome. Many superior minds felt that in the English Church might be found modest types of goodness, but that the Roman produced the heroic. There was a strong rebound in Anglican England from insular ignorance and prejudice in matters Catholic. English travelers had come in contact with high-minded French priests of great originality and eloquence, like Lamennais and Montalembert, the friends of Rio.

These convictions took a strong hold of W. G. Ward, remarkable for great controversial gifts. In his writings he constantly compared the English church with the Roman, to the disadvantage of the former (cf. his *Ideal of a Christian Church*, 1844). Newman's apostasy in 1845 marked the culmination of these Roman tendencies, but broke the Oxford Movement.¹

So then Rio, coming to England while the movement was reaching white heat, found what he missed at home: an atmosphere surcharged with religious sentiment and spirituality. What wonder his teaching was taken up with an avidity, a violence, to which many a page in Ruskin bears eloquent witness! This atmosphere was identical in essentials with that which, two generations earlier, among German artists had produced the reaction against Mengs, and a little later had given birth to German pre-Raphaelitism.

Because of these favorable conditions, Rio's message was destined indirectly to become a great factor in the present culture of the English-speaking nations.

In 1847 Lord Lindsay put out in London his *Sketches of the History of Christian Art*.² This work, written in letters to a young friend, aims to call attention to the importance of Christian art, and is based, for material, chiefly on Rumohr; for interpretation, on Rio. Lanzi, Förster, Kugler, and others are also quoted;

¹ Cf. R. W. Church, *The Oxford Movement* (London, 1900).

² Alex. Will. Crawford Lindsay, twenty-fifth Earl of Crawford (1812-80), was profoundly religious throughout his life and directed his last years to the study of religious history. His sympathy with its artistic side resulted in his best work, the book mentioned above. The second edition of it appeared in 1882. (Cf. *Dictionary of National Biography* sub "Lindsay.") This edition, according to the introductory notice, offers no changes from the first. I used the American reprint of it (New York, 1886).

nevertheless, Rumohr and Rio are the author's guides, and he constantly refers to them. He calls the *Poésie chrétienne* "a work graceful, eloquent and appreciative, and calculated to make enthusiasts in the cause of the *Ecole mystique*, exclusively of all other excellence."

The very first pages reveal Lindsay's view-point. We read there:

But the Sculpture of Greece is the voice of Intellect and Thought, communing with itself in solitude, feeding on beauty and yearning after truth. While the Painting of Christendom—(and we must remember that the glories of Christianity in the full extent of the term, are yet to come)—is that of an immortal spirit, conversing with its God.¹

He disclaims indifference toward Greek art ("do not for a moment suppose me insensible to classical art"), and pretends to take great pleasure in the Elgin marbles. Yet he continues: "But none of these completely satisfy us. The highest element of truth and beauty, the Spiritual, was beyond the soar of Phidias and Praxiteles." Consequently the Christian *Weltanschauung* is far superior to the Greek. Hence the "vantage" of the Bible over the *Iliad*.² The fine arts are a sort of Trinity of Unity. Architecture symbolizes the Father, Sculpture the Son, and Painting the Holy Spirit, the Smile of God illuminating creation.³

The work contains first a treatise on "The Ideal, and the Character and Dignity of Christian Art;" then one entitled "Table of Symbols: The Hieroglyphical language of the Universal Church during the Early Ages." Then come (among other things) "Sketches of the History of Christian Art," dealing with Christian painting, sculpture, and architecture down to the fifteenth century. The author stopped here, but hoped some time to continue.

Lindsay's *Sketches* in themselves have no great importance. They are of interest because symptomatic of a new current, and furthermore because they helped to inspire him in whom the whole movement in favor of Christian art culminated.

Ruskin, by temperament and training as religious as Rio and Lindsay, very early in life exhibited a strong affection for the pic-

¹ *Sketches*, Vol. I, p. 3.

² *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 6.

turesque in architecture.¹ This predilection was perhaps encouraged in him by the presumption in favor of Gothic architecture started, as we saw, by Englishmen and Germans in the eighteenth century, and in the nineteenth most powerfully furthered in England by Pugin.

For early Italian painting, we know, there was little feeling in England before the appearance of the *Poésie chrétienne*. Hence it was possible for Ruskin to go to Italy as a young man without appreciating the merit of the older school. He even could publish a treatise on art (*Modern Painters*, Vol. I, 1843) in which appears none of that explosive enthusiasm for Christian painting which fills many of his later publications. In the autumn and winter of 1844-45 he claims to have studied Rio and Lindsay.² He could now say of himself: "perceiving thus, what a blind bat and puppy I had been, all through Italy, determined that at least I must see Pisa and Florence again before writing another word of *Modern Painters*."³

From now on it became one of the chief labors of his life to spread the gospel that art can be inspiring and uplifting, can be an ennobling force, only as long as it is the expression of the religious spirit. This spirit, however, he found exclusively in the early masters. The wordliness and learning of the Renaissance killed it.⁴

His attitude is perhaps most clearly and forcibly expressed in his essay on "Pre-Raphaelitism," originally delivered in November, 1853, as Lecture IV of the "Lectures on Architecture and Painting."⁵ Here he tells us:

¹ See his *Poetry of Architecture*, etc., written when he was nineteen, and published over the nom-de-plume "Kata Phusin" (cf. Collingwood, *The Life and Work of John Ruskin* [Boston and New York, 1893], Vol. I, pp. 81 ff.).

² Cf. *Praeterita*, 2d ed. (New York, no date), Vol. II, p. 186. He probably read and studied Rio at this time, but his memory must have played him false in regard to Lindsay, for the latter's book did not appear until 1847. Ruskin wrote a review of the *Sketches* in the year of their appearance, and published it in the *Quarterly Review* for June, 1847. It is reprinted in *On the Old Road*. Collingwood (*op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 139) uncritically copies *Praeterita*.

³ *Praeterita*, Vol. II, p. 186. In consequence he inserted in the third edition of Vol. I of *Modern Painters* the passages on the drawing of flowers by Cima da Conegliano, Fra Angelico, etc.

⁴ Fortunately, Ruskin is not always consistent. We should hardly expect dithyrambic enthusiasm for Tintoretto from the greatest follower of Rio.

⁵ Cf. the "Brantwood edition" of *Ruskin's Works* (New York, 1892), pp. 187 ff.

Now the division of time which the Pre-Raphaelites [meaning, of course, Rossetti and his friends] have adopted, in choosing Raphael as the man whose works mark the separation between Mediævalism and Modernism, is perfectly accurate. It has been accepted as such by all their opponents. You have, then, the three periods: Classicalism, extending to the fall of the Roman empire; Mediævalism, extending from that fall to the close of the fifteenth century; and Modernism thenceforward to our days. Classicism began with Pagan Faith. Mediævalism began and continued, wherever civilisation began and continued to *confess* Christ.

About the time of Raphael began the denial of religious belief. Modernism is characterized by indifference to God and his word. The consequence is that all ancient art was religious, and all modern art is profane;

. . . . that art is the *impurer* for not being in the service of Christianity, is indisputable, and that is the main point I have now to do with just as classical art was greatest in building to its gods, so mediæval art was great in building to its gods, and modern art is not great, because it builds to no God.

No one could claim:

. . . . that Angelico painting the life of Christ, Benozzo painting the life of Abraham, Ghirlandajo painting the life of the Virgin, Giotto painting the life of St. Francis, were worse employed, or likely to produce a less healthy art, than Titian painting the loves of Venus and Adonis, than Correggio painting the naked Antiope, than Salvator painting the slaughters of the thirty years' war. If you will not let me call the one kind of labour Christian, and the other unchristian, at least you will let me call the one moral, and the other immoral, and that is all I ask you to admit When the entire pupose of art was moral teaching, it naturally took truth for its first object, and beauty, and the pleasure resulting from beauty, only for its second. But when it lost all purpose of moral teaching, it as naturally took beauty for its first object, and truth for its second.

Raphael, Ruskin goes on to explain, was responsible for "the great change which clouds the career of mediæval art." For in his twenty-fifth year he decorated the chambers of the Vatican, where he wrote

the Mene, Tekel, Upharsin of the Arts of Christianity And he wrote it thus: On one wall of that chamber he placed a picture of the World or Kingdom of *Theology*, presided over by *Christ*. And on the side wall of

that same chamber he placed the World or Kingdom of *Poetry*, presided over by *Apollo*. And from that spot, and from that hour, the intellect and the art of Italy date their degradation.

If Bury had put in writing the views which left such an impress on his fellow-painters in Rome, and which later irritated Meyer, he might have expressed himself much as does Ruskin here, though doubtless less violently. Certainly Ruskin's statement sounds like an expansion and exaggeration of certain passages in Fr. Schlegel's *Gemähldebeschreibungen aus Paris und den Niederlanden*, and some sentences in it strike one like modified transcriptions from Rio.¹ His passionate preference for the early masters is attested again and again throughout his work. We are all familiar with the praise of Cimabue, Giotto, Orcagna, Fra Angelico, etc., found in the various volumes of *Modern Painters* and in other works. We remember, too, that Lippi and Botticelli rose on his horizon comparatively late in life—and the fact is not without significance for one who had read Rio. We further call to mind Ruskin's contempt for the Bolognese, especially for Cochin's favorite, Guercino, and also, in spite of appreciation for his technical ability, for that other darling of the eighteenth century, Correggio. "Sensuality and impurity" soiled the brush of both. The Renaissance, readers of Ruskin are well aware, was to the great prose-poet merely an age of decay. As Wackenroder fifty years before had pleaded for a simple spirit in art, and had professed contempt for technique, so his famous English successor never tires of lauding "simple and unlearned men" like Giotto, Orcagna, Angelico, Memmi, Pisano, and of attacking "the learned men that followed them."² For knowledge and science (especially the science of words) are a burden. They have a pestilent effect. They lead to the pride of science which killeth; "the one main purpose of the Renaissance artists, in all their work, was to show how much they knew." This is "Renaissance Pride."³ The interest in paganism, so strong during the Renaissance, is deplorable. There followed from this interest that "all the most exalted faculties of man, which, up to that period, had been employed in

¹ Cf. above, p. 55.

² *Stones of Venice*, "The Spite of the Proud," sec. 23 (Brantwood edition).

³ *Ibid.*, sec. 32.

the service of Faith, were now transferred to the service of Fiction."¹ The inevitable corollary of such self-conceit was decay. This is the great "Mene" to be derived from the study of Venetian history.²

Ruskin goes beyond Rio, and the Germans from whom Rio borrowed, in more persistently emphasizing the purely moral aspect of art. This attitude frequently comes to the surface in Ruskin's writings, and is perhaps most tersely expressed in "The Relation of Art to Morals," the third of the "Lectures on Art": "You must have the right moral state first, or you cannot have the art. But when the art is once obtained, its reflected action enhances and completes the moral state out of which it arose."³

This inability to recognize the essential difference between the moral and the artistic instinct was common in the literary and the art criticism of all countries in the eighteenth century. In Germany the cultured had become accustomed to a clearer method of thinking through Goethe's and Schiller's illuminating contributions to criticism. In England and America, mainly through Ruskin's influence, absence of mature insight to this day characterizes discussions of the subject.

It is not my purpose, however, to show how much harm Ruskin has done. Quite the contrary. Certainly his method is viciously unscientific. To quote a felicitous word of Professor Norton: "Today he rides with Sir Galahad, pure, inspired, steadfast as he; tomorrow with Don Quixote, generous, deluded, extravagant as he."⁴ Yet it was he who by dint of an unequaled genius for prose and an irresistible enthusiasm made love for beauty a strong factor in English culture, and thus gave it a degree of mellowness which, without his influence, it might lack. Surely, to have accomplished that is as much as any mortal need aspire to attain. His very lack of balance helped him, as lack of balance had helped Rousseau, with whom he has so much in common. And his insistence on the identity of religion and true art was

¹ *Loc. cit.*, sec. 102.

² See the concluding chapters of *The Stones of Venice*.

³ Cf. Brantwood edition, p. 80.

⁴ Brantwood edition, volume containing the "Lectures on Architecture and Painting," p. v.

the very channel through which his message found ready access to the hearts of thousands of his countrymen. For, while the German public had been disciplined through the influence of Goethe, Meyer, and Rumohr, the English had remained indifferent to art in spite of Reynolds and Fuseli,¹ and hence could best be reached through its veneration for Christian dogma.

Ruskin's influence, though still strong, is no longer as overwhelming as it was even twenty years ago. The author of *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* has done his share toward mitigating it. Let us not lapse into the tone of bitterness or ridicule which marks much of the estimate of Ruskin on the part of Whistler's school. Still, let us not forget that what was pardonable, even admirable, in Bury, Wackenroder, and Schlegel, as a protest against a view of art chill with intellectuality, need no longer control us who have been freed.²

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¹This indifference had evidently not been greatly mitigated by Thomas Phillips' *Lectures on the History and Principles of Painting* (London, 1833). In the first of these delivered in 1827, he introduced an appreciative estimate of Giotto. In the second, delivered in the same year, he shows fair understanding of Masaccio and rather remarkable insight into the genius of Signorelli. But he evidently has no understanding of Lippi, Botticelli or Ghirlandajo. Besides, Phillips' style was hardly adapted to arouse a whole nation.

²I owe grateful acknowledgment to Geheimrat Professor Suphan and Archivrat Dr. Schüddekopf, of Weimar; to Professor C. E. Norton, of Cambridge, Mass.; as well as to the libraries of Harvard, Cornell, and the University of Chicago, for their generosity in granting me access to valuable material.